

INSPECTION REPORT

HISTON and IMPINGTON INFANT SCHOOL

HISTON

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110752

Head teacher: Mrs D Tucker

Reporting inspector: Mrs H E Davies
21687

Dates of inspection: 12th May - 15th May 2003

Inspection number: 247039

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 School
School category:	Community School
Age range of pupils:	Four to Seven
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	New School Road Histon Cambridge
Postcode:	CB4 9LL
Telephone number:	01223 568826
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Hugh McCurdy
Date of previous inspection:	06/10/97

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21687	Mrs H E Davies	Registered inspector	English Design and technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9103	Mrs A Strong	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22704	Mr G Williams	Team inspector	Science Physical education Music Special educational needs	
4099	Mr R Braithwaite	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32531	Mrs S Pearce	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Information and communication technology	Pupils' attitudes values and personal development.
18498	Mrs D Morris	Team inspector		Assessment Unit

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Histon and Impington Infant School is situated in the pleasant village of Histon just north of Cambridge. Most pupils come from the local area. Pupils come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds, but the majority of families live in privately owned homes. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic background. There are 254 pupils on roll, 131 boys and 123 girls aged 4 to 7. There are 90 Reception age children in the Foundation Stage. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but it is generally average overall. However, there is always a very wide range of attainment in each year group with a significant minority of children having above average communication, language and literacy skills and well developed personal and social skills whilst another small group of children have significant special educational needs. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average at almost 4 percent. However, this does not give an accurate indication of the educational background of pupils as the percentage of pupils with special educational needs at 24.2 percent, most for learning difficulties, is broadly in line with the national average. The school has an assessment unit for 10 pupils all on the autistic spectrum. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs most with autism is above the national average. Two pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language, which is proportionally higher than in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Histon and Impington Infant School is an effective school providing a good education for its pupils. Its strengths well outweigh its weaknesses. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in speaking, listening, mathematics, art and design, music and physical education. The overall quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and meets the needs of a very wide range of attainment. Provision for special educational needs is good in the main school. Pupils have good attitudes and are eager to learn. Pupils are cared for effectively and parents have very positive views of the school. The head teacher's very clear educational vision is shared by staff, governors and parents. They work together well to provide a positive learning environment for pupils. All pupils, whatever their individual needs are valued and are fully included in the work of the school. Management is effective in identifying what the school does well and what could be better. Taking into account the very wide range of attainment in each year group, the schools effectiveness and its unit costs Histon and Impington School provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- More pupils than average achieved the higher level 3 standard in reading and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests of 2002.
- Creativity is a strength of the school, with standards in speaking, listening, art and design, music and physical education being above expectations for seven year olds.
- The head teacher has a very clear educational philosophy of valuing individuals, which is shared by staff and governors and reflected very well in the day-to-day life of the school, particularly through well-planned assemblies.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with much very good teaching observed during the inspection.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy school. They are very eager to learn and form very constructive relationships.
- Parents support the school very well and have very positive views of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology.
- Standards in writing could be even better.
- The co-ordination and use of assessment information could be improved so that it is used more effectively to measure success against predicted targets.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. It has made satisfactory improvement since that time. The school has addressed the key issues and now has schemes of work in place for all subjects ensuring improved planning and continuity. Assessment procedures are in place but the information could be used more effectively. Sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of geography and science. Reports to parents now meet statutory requirements. However, standards in information and communication technology are now below expectations. The school has identified this subject in its development plan, as an area for improvement. Staff are committed to improvement and have the capacity to make it happen.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	B	C	C	C
Writing	C	D	C	C
Mathematics	A	B	B	B

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

Despite the good teaching standards are still average overall. This is because although the school is successful at enabling many pupils to achieve higher levels the significant number of pupils with special educational needs keeps the overall percentages down. Compared to all schools and similar schools (those with similar number of free school meals and in this school balanced with the number of pupils with special educational need) results for seven year olds have been above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. The overall trend for improvement, over recent years, is not as good as the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are likely to be similar overall to the national average in reading, writing and science and above in mathematics especially in number. Average and above average pupils are likely to do as well in reading and mathematics and better in writing than previously. Standards in writing are improving and more pupils are likely to achieve the higher level 3 this year. Creativity is highly valued in school and by the age of 7 standards are above average in speaking and listening, art and design, music and physical education. In information and communication technology standards are below expectations for 7 year olds. Standards in all other subjects are as expected for 7 year olds. In religious education standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The majority of children in the present Reception year are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the school year and a significant minority will exceed them and be working at level 1 of the National Curriculum. Pupils work is carefully assessed, however targets are not yet set effectively to predict school results. Pupils make good progress overall, particularly in the creative subjects and in reading and mathematics, when judged against baseline assessments at entry.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school. They leave their parents happily and are very eager to participate in all of the activities that the school has to offer. Most work hard and try to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Behaviour is good in the better lessons and in assemblies but not as good in the satisfactory lessons. Pupils understand what is expected of them. They know the school and class rules and adhere to them. Occasionally pupils are noisy and fussy going out to and coming in from play and during wet lunch times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Most pupils enjoy taking responsibilities in the classrooms and are keen to take every opportunity to help in routine tasks. They form very positive relationships with each other and with all adults in school.

Attendance	Good. The level of attendance has been maintained above the national average since the previous inspection.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. This is similar to the judgement at the previous inspection. Nearly a third of observed teaching was very good. Much of the very good teaching observed was in art and design, music and physical education. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. However, it is better in reading than writing. Teachers ensure that work is matched well to a very wide range of attainment. All assistants work effectively to support pupils including those with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils are identified and have their needs met well, enabling many of them to achieve appropriate levels in their work, particularly in reading and number work. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by outside agencies and volunteers. Great emphasis is placed on developing pupils speaking skills, by providing many interesting and creative activities. However, their recorded work does not always reflect their above average speaking skills because there are too few opportunities for them to develop and practise the writing skills learnt in the literacy lesson and to write carefully at length about the things that interest them. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, other than in information and communication technology, where expertise is still developing. Recent acquisition of resources is now providing more opportunities for pupils to gain “hands on” experience of using computers in school. However, for the current Year 2 pupils there is an element of “catch up”. Pupils, including the youngest children in the Reception year respond very well to the very good relationships that all adults in school develop with them. This supportive and caring ethos permeates the work of the school. Pupils learn well and make good progress in most aspects of their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The quality and range of learning activities are good with particular strengths in the creative aspects of the curriculum. Many interesting visits out of school and visitors to school plus the very good community links make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, strategies for developing writing are not as effective as they could be and provision for developing information and communication technology is underdeveloped.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good in the main school. The Code of Practice is effective and individual education plans identify clear targets for pupils. In the unit it is satisfactory overall. There are very good relationships that lead to a very good atmosphere and pupils who feel valued and secure. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of individual needs is very good but not securely supported by effective written individual education plans. Curriculum provision for the youngest children is not established appropriately.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Effective support is given to those few pupils who have English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils'	Good. There is a strong ethos enabling pupils to understand the importance

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	of respecting others and themselves. The school prepares pupils well for life in a multicultural society and provides enriching experiences for them. Assemblies and circle time promote this area well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Procedures for child protection and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Pupils are cared for well. Assessment information is collected appropriately. However, it is not used effectively enough to predict school results. The school works very well with parents who give great support to the pupils by assisting in school and at home with many activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The head teacher has a very clear philosophy of valuing individuals, which is shared by staff and implemented very well in the day-to-day life of the school. She is supported appropriately by the deputy head teacher. Team leaders and co-ordinators understand their roles and work together effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are effective. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They work together in shaping the direction of the school well. However, some minor statutory requirements are not fully implemented.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school's strategy for performance management is good and securely in place. All areas of the school are evaluated, sometimes with undue optimism, and priorities are identified in the school development and action plan. However, the most important developments are not identified clearly enough. Saying what staff will do rather than what pupils will achieve. Action is being taken to raise standards particularly in writing and more recently in information and communication technology.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are supported well through effective financial planning. Specific grants are used well for their designated purposes. The principles of best value for money are applied effectively with support from the LEA. There is a good number and match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and the wide range of individual need. Resources are good overall. Accommodation is satisfactory and due for major improvements shortly.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like school. • That behaviour is good. • That the teaching is good. • That the information they receive is good and that they are comfortable approaching the school with a question or problem. • That the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents said they would like more extra curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with all of the positive comments. Bearing in mind the age of pupils and the many extra curricular activities provided in school time the inspection team judge that the school provides good extra curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Despite the good teaching standards are still average overall. This is because although the school is successful at enabling many pupils to achieve higher levels the significant number of pupils with special educational needs keeps the overall percentages down. Compared to all schools, results for seven year olds have been average in reading for the past two years, although an above average number of pupils, 32 percent achieved the higher level 3, last year reflecting good achievement for this group of pupils compared to their slightly above average baseline assessment. In mathematics standards were well above average in 2000 and above average in 2001 and 2002. Last year 35 percent of pupils achieved the higher level 3, reflecting good achievement for this group of pupils compared to their slightly below average baseline assessment. However, in writing, although the majority of pupils achieved the average level 2 very few achieved level 3. This is not quite so good as the judgement of the previous inspection. The school's overall trend for improvement in recent years is not as good as the national trend.
2. Children begin the Reception year, on a part-time basis in the September of the year that they become five. Children coming into school have had a variety of pre-school experiences including nursery, playgroup, childminder and some children have none of these experiences. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but it is generally average overall. However, there is always a very wide range of attainment in each year group with a significant minority of children having above average communication, language and literacy skills and well developed personal and social skills whilst another small group of children have significant special educational needs. Children make good gains in their learning and by the end of the Reception year the majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Some children exceed them, particularly in personal and social development and in communication language and literacy skills.
3. Pupils are well prepared for the National Curriculum that they start at the beginning of Year 1. Inspection evidence indicates that the good teaching and learning ensures that pupils achieve well throughout the key stage and by the end of Year 2 attain standards that are above expectations in speaking and listening, mathematics, art and design, music and physical education. This year standards are likely to be similar overall to the national average in writing, science and reading although in reading an above average number of pupils are likely to achieve level 3. Standards in writing are improving and more pupils are likely to achieve the higher level 3 this year. In information and communication technology standards are below expectations for 7 year olds. Standards in all other subjects are as expected for 7 year olds. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Parents are pleased with progress that their children make and the standards that they achieve.
4. Standards in speaking and listening are good. In reading and writing they are average overall. However, a significant number of pupils are likely to achieve the higher level 3 in reading but fewer in writing. Pupils' achievement in speaking, listening and reading is good. In Year 2, pupils, speak confidently and clearly whilst obeying the conventions of discussion by listening politely to one another and waiting their turn to speak. In reading, younger pupils develop their phonic skills so that they are familiar with strategies to help them to pronounce unfamiliar words. As they move through the school pupils gain good knowledge of punctuation and of what each symbol means. They use punctuation to enhance the meaning of the text correctly. The weakest aspect of English is writing. The school recognises this and has concentrated on raising standards in this area. Much emphasis is placed on providing pupils with interesting topics to write about and literacy lessons are used well to develop skills but these skills are not as yet always transferred effectively to work in other subjects.

5. In mathematics, evidence suggests that standards of attainment are above national average, particularly in number work upon which the school places greater emphasis. The school succeeds well in enabling a significant number of pupils to achieve the higher level 3. However, there are a number of pupils with special education needs, who are less likely to achieve higher levels, but nevertheless make good progress. Overall pupils make good progress in learning, particularly in number work.
6. Standards in science are in line with the national average, although a significant number of pupils are likely to achieve level 3. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is good. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are provided with many opportunities to improve their investigative skills. There are strengths in pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things and the school's conservation area is used effectively to give a particular focus to this aspect of science.
7. In information and communication technology standards are below those expected nationally for 7 year olds. Standards have not been maintained effectively since the previous inspection. The school recognises that it has not kept pace with technological advancement in providing adequate resources to promote sufficient opportunities for pupils to achieve the expected standards. However, the school has recently bought twelve new personal computers and these have been installed in classrooms throughout the school, bringing the number to two in each classroom. Unfortunately these are not yet networked but will be as part of the county plan by spring of 2004. The school chooses to have differing software and at the moment only two PC's in the library have Internet access. This means that teachers are limited in their style of delivery and pupils are not always provided with sufficient opportunities to develop and practise their skills, or to explore the World Wide Web.
8. Art and design is strongly valued throughout the school and consequently pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally for their age. Standards have been maintained effectively since the previous inspection. Pupils receive a rich variety of opportunities to explore artistic techniques and skills. The extensive work on display throughout the whole school covering most areas of the curriculum reinforces the emphasis given to the arts. The current exhibition in the Acorn Gallery provides pupils and visitors to the school with the opportunity to view original pieces of artwork that include watercolours, pottery, greetings cards, jewellery and textiles.
9. In music the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally for their age at 7. This is a similar picture to that at the previous inspection. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to learn, understand and appreciate music.
10. Pupils performing skills are very good. Pupils speak, sing, act and move with confidence and poise. In an assembly pupils, including those with special educational needs, participated in high quality music making involving singing in two parts, percussion accompaniment and choral singing.
11. In physical education the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally for their age at 7. Standards have been effectively maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils use space well when moving around the hall or on the field, independently or with a partner. They consider carefully their own and others safety during rigorous warm up sessions. Very good social skills are demonstrated when pupils wait their turn or are observing and evaluating the performance of others. In dance, pupils respond very well to the music, interpreting the mood and rhythm through the creation of imaginative shapes and movements. Movements are individual and of high quality. In games, pupils acquire the skills of passing and receiving very well using both hands and feet.

12. In all other subjects pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. In religious education standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The good teaching they receive is effective in raising their levels of achievement. The additional good quality support in the classrooms ensures that they have confidence to take part in all classroom activities and work effectively in small groups. Thus appropriate reading and language development helps them to complete tasks in other subjects. Higher attaining pupils are identified effectively and have appropriate work set for them. There is a gifted and talented register and the head teacher works appropriately with these pupils on a regular basis. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support that enables them to achieve the standards of which they are capable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes to school are good and they behave well. Pupils' personal development is effective and they form very good relationships with each other and the adults in school. This very good feature has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are very keen and eager to come to school. These positive attitudes to learning are confirmed by the parents' questionnaire and comments made at the parents meeting. Standards in this aspect of school life are not quite as high as they were at the previous inspection.
15. Children in the Foundation Stage adjust quickly to routines, due to a gradual induction programme that enables them to develop and build on relationships with staff and each other. At the start of the day, as they come into school, they leave their parents without fuss and settle down quickly in the classroom. They know the routines at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions and use these calming times effectively.
16. In Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy school and their attitudes are good. They arrive at school, sometimes by bicycle and play happily in the playground until the start of the school day. Members of staff make themselves available on the playground and greet pupils as they enter the school. This good practice reinforces the caring ethos that is so evident in all that happens in the school.
17. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn. They listen carefully to the teacher and respond well to questions by putting up their hands and volunteering answers. In a very good art lesson, pupils were highly focused, sustained their concentration for a long period of time and worked hard to succeed in what they were doing with very pleasing outcomes.
18. In lessons where teaching is good or very good, behaviour is good and sometimes very good. In satisfactory lessons, pupils sometimes have difficulty staying on task, particularly if they have to sit on the carpet for a long time during the lesson introduction. Movement around school, especially in the long corridor is sometimes noisy and less controlled. Outside pupils play boisterously, but there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. Any incidents of unkind behaviour are dealt with immediately by the staff on duty or referred to the head teacher. Pupils have an understanding of how they should behave both in and out of class and are developing a sense of what is right and wrong. They have an understanding of the needs of pupils in the assessment unit, recognising that they behave differently at times and concessions must be made for this in both the playground and the classroom.
19. Good use is made of circle times when pupils sit together to discuss issues important to them. Pupils know the rules of circle time and value each other's contributions. Opportunity is given to enable pupils to talk about feelings and concerns in an open environment where everyone can have a chance to speak. For example, in a good circle time session, pupils talked about how they would care for animals. A pupil talked about the feeling of sadness at finding an injured animal in

the road, which led to a moment of quiet reflection. In assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider the feelings of others.

20. There are some opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for routine duties. Special classroom helpers return the register to the office, tidy the classroom and set out the hall for assembly. Pupils enjoy these responsibilities and complete their tasks sensibly and calmly. They act as good role models for others who are very keen to be chosen.
21. Relationships within the school are very good. Adults act as very good role models for the pupils. Pupils show respect for teachers, assistants and the many parent helpers. In one lesson in the Foundation Stage, as a parent left, the whole class stopped to thank her for her help. Teachers take time to thank their classes for good behaviour, acts of kindness and offers of help. These simple acts of appreciation reaffirm the school's caring ethos. In the dining room, lunchtimes are social occasions, when pupils are able to sit and talk with their friends. It is a calm environment, where lunchtime supervisors monitor noise levels and encourage good eating habits. Pupils help to stack trays and generally help around the dining hall. Pupils show respect to the lunchtime supervisors and this is reciprocated.
22. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work, especially when working with the motivated teachers and support staff. They try hard to behave well at all times and focus on their individual tasks. As a result, they are proud of their efforts and achievements.
23. The level of attendance has been maintained above the national average since the previous inspection and is good. There is no unauthorised absence as any unaccounted absence or lateness is rigorously followed up and addressed. Pupils are keen to come to school and are punctual. Registration is quick and meets all legal requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. This is similar to the judgement at the previous inspection. Nearly a third of the teaching was very good. Despite the good teaching, standards are still average overall. This is because although the school is successful at enabling many pupils to achieve higher levels the significant number of pupils with special educational needs keeps the overall percentages down. Much of the very good teaching observed during the inspection was in art and design, music and physical education. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall with relative strengths in the teaching of reading and number as opposed to writing. The school moved cautiously at first when it introduced the National Literacy Strategy as each class had a two-year age range. The school also felt that creativity might be compromised. A change in class organisation plus the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy combined to bring about a commitment to deliver the national strategies effectively.
25. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and sometimes very good. Key features of the very good teaching are when teachers have high expectations and plan activities that are carefully matched to the early learning goals and children's individual needs. Children show enthusiasm, and generally display very good attention to learning and frequently become engrossed in activities. The climate for learning is good because good use is made of the quality resources available including the outdoor area, where children often work with a very experienced nursery nurse in order to enhance physical and social development. Teachers generally have high expectations but occasionally boisterous and noisy behaviour leads to limitations in children's learning.
26. At Key Stage 1, teachers ensure that work is matched well to a wide range of attainment in each class. General assistants and learning support assistants work effectively to support all pupils including those with special educational needs. During literacy lessons, small groups of pupils are supported regularly by the special educational needs co-ordinator. A learning support assistant

- provides effective early literacy support for another small group of pupils. These initiatives are making a positive impact on pupils learning and are helping to raise standards for individual pupils. Higher attaining pupils are identified and have their needs met well, enabling many of them to achieve higher levels in their work, particularly in reading and number work. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by outside agencies and volunteers. This has a very positive impact on the standards they achieve and develops their enjoyment of learning and builds self-confidence. Homework is set regularly and pupils' work is generally marked appropriately. The use of "blue assessment books" in English illustrates progress over time effectively.
27. Great emphasis is placed on developing pupils speaking skills, by successfully providing many interesting and creative activities, so that pupils have the vocabulary and interest to develop their writing skills and become enthusiastic writers. However, their recorded work does not always reflect their above average speaking skills because teachers provide too few opportunities for them to develop and practise the writing skills acquired in the literacy lessons. Too few opportunities are provided for them to write carefully at length about the things that interest them in all areas of the curriculum, for example, in history or geography, where very little written work was observed. Much emphasis is placed on pupils writing "super sentences" in literacy but this is not always transferred to other subjects.
28. Teachers make good use of praise to motivate pupils and they value the contribution of individuals, which promotes confidence and encourages pupils to have a go and not be afraid to make mistakes. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, other than in information and communication technology, where expertise is still developing. Recent acquisition of resources is now providing more opportunities for pupils to gain "hands on" experience of using computers in lessons. However, for the current Year 2 pupils there is an element of "catch up".
29. The many general classroom assistants and learning support assistants work hard and are used well. Teachers also harness effectively the many offers of help from parents who willingly give of their time to support pupils' learning. Sometimes this is not organised well enough and the combined effect of too many adults can disturb lessons. Teachers, led by team leaders, work well in year groups and plan their work together so that provision across year groups is consistent. Pupils, including the youngest children in the Reception year, respond very well to the very good relationships that all adults in school develop with them. This supportive and caring ethos permeates the work of the school. Pupils learn well and make good progress in most aspects of their work.
30. Teachers are particularly aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and as a result pupils make good progress. The majority attain the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics but a significant minority do not. Individual education plans match the work effectively to their needs and teachers make helpful notes on their progress. The use of the Acorn Room to support pupils with special educational needs provides a secure and happy environment, which promotes their learning well.

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

31. The quality and range of learning activities for pupils in the school are good and an appropriate school curriculum is fully in place. The curriculum is broadly based and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum together with provision for personal, social and health education, drugs awareness and sex education. During this inspection the school was found to allocate adequate time for all subjects, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The school's curriculum has particular strengths in the creative aspects of education and standards in art and design, music and physical education are above those expected nationally. The school works very well with partner institutions and ensures that the community makes a very positive contribution to pupils learning. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and ensures that

all children have the opportunity to achieve the early learning goals. However, in Year 1 and Year 2 strategies for developing writing are not as effective as they could be and provision for developing information and communication technology is underdeveloped and consequently unsatisfactory.

32. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented, and the school is examining ways in which it can introduce even more flexibility into its approach in these areas. It has been successful in raising and maintaining good standards in speaking and listening and enabling a higher proportion than average to achieve level 3 in reading but less successful so far in writing particularly across the curriculum. Numeracy is well developed with a heavy emphasis in the curriculum, but there is less evidence of pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measures.
33. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed satisfactory policies and schemes of work in all subjects, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. This enables teachers in each year group to plan work together so that pupils in the same year group receive a similar curriculum.
34. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has implemented the new Code of Practice effectively. Their needs are identified carefully and individual education plans are drawn up appropriately. Their progress is monitored well and reviews are carried out correctly. Teachers in collaboration with the special educational needs co-ordinator draw up individual education plans, for pupils. Pupils with statements of educational need, in the main school, are supported well and take a full and active part in all aspects of the curriculum. There are good systems of record keeping to support statement reviews, which take place as required and for which parental views are taken into account. All pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and effective arrangements are in place to support the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
35. Provision for pupils' personal development through personal, social and health education is good. The youngest children knew of the health benefits of cycling to school and the importance of exercise and personal hygiene. Typical of much of the school's ethos for caring, especially for other people and for animals, were the pupils in Year 1 who talked about their pets, and how they learned to look after them. Circle time and assemblies are used well to emphasise this aspect of pupils growing up.
36. Provision for extra curricular activities is good. It is provided mainly through outside visits for example, to Anglesey Abbey, Upware Field Study Centre, Duxford Imperial War Museum, The Botanical Garden, The Fitzwilliam Museum, The Royal Opera House, Parish Church, Vision Park and Stibbington. Visitors to the school, such as, a local policeman and the 'Histon Giant' – real local history with a dramatic artefact also enrich the curriculum. Other activities in school include French conversation classes, violin lessons and 'Sparklers' (Sunday school on Tuesdays run by local people), plus a Saturday morning football club run by two fathers. There are also visits from puppeteers and musicians. Children in the Reception year are shown the change in the seasons by walks to The Brook. Such opportunities enrich the curriculum and are beneficial to pupils' personal and social development.
37. The school makes appropriate provision for pupils identified as gifted or talented. The head teacher supports these pupils with extension work, particularly in literacy. The school is actively looking at ways in which it can extend this approach across other areas. Teachers have effective identification guidelines for such pupils.
38. The school makes very effective use of the contribution of the community to pupils' learning. The school is firmly at the heart of the community, taking part in events that are local traditions, such as Feast Week and the Flower Festival in the church. The school enjoys very strong links with

the church, St. Andrews, where services such as Harvest Festival and Christingle are held. The vicar, who is also chair of governors, is a frequent visitor to the school. Some parents bring their skills to the school and others bring knowledge of their own faiths such as Judaism. Volunteers from the East of England Development Agency hear pupils read. The small but very active School Association arranges activities such as the Summer Fair, Christmas Shopping Miniature Fair and it provides a float for the Feast Week parade.

39. Relationships with partner institutions are very good. The school is a member of a group of six schools, which includes the local Village College. The head teachers meet regularly to exchange information, policies and share resources. There is a very good induction programme for children coming into the school from the local authority Nursery. They work closely with the Reception classes in planning and assessment. There are very good procedures in place for preparing Year 2 pupils for transfer to the junior school. Staff from the junior school visit and pupils spend a morning at the junior school to familiarise themselves with their future environment, thus ensuring a smooth transition to the next stage of their education. There is good liaison between the staff of the two schools.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual is good. During the week of inspection the focus of assemblies was looking after ourselves, our environment, our school and each other. An attractive display featured a candle, a painting and a floral arrangement that effectively centred the pupils' attention. The candle was lit at the beginning of each assembly and pupils were asked to think about others, for example, reception children were asked to think about someone's Grandfather who was ill. During a singing assembly all pupils took part in a highly effective singing round, accompanied by children playing non-tuned percussion instruments. All pupils sang reflectively and there were a few seconds of stillness at the end of the song where everyone was aware of a 'special moment'. In a very good circle time in a Reception class, children were given an opportunity to describe how they felt as they ate their favourite food. The teacher sensitively directed the children's thinking and gave time for reflection as well as an opportunity for empathy as one child was unable to eat certain foods.
41. There is a strong ethos within the school that enables pupils to understand the importance of respecting others and themselves. In good lessons, opportunities are frequently provided for pupils to reflect on their actions, feelings and values. All pupils are encouraged to care for each other.
42. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Time is given for pupils to think about the difference between right and wrong. Staff encourage good behaviour and make a point of praising pupils when appropriate. Personal and social education has a high priority throughout the school and this is reflected in teachers careful questioning during registration, discussion and circle times. Pupils show respect for the needs of others as well as for themselves. Pupils are expected to care for each other, especially when out in the playground. Assembly times are used effectively to provide opportunities to remind children about their actions and think about how they can help others. In a very good assembly Reception children reflected on how they could help others in the playground and were encouraged to 'hold that thought' as they went out and to 'put it into action'.
43. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school's published philosophy states that children learn best when they are happy, secure, respected and valued as individuals. This is reflected throughout the school by all adults who work there and by the many volunteer parent helpers. Parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. Throughout the school, pupils work together co-operatively, for example, Reception children play well together, taking turns on the large outdoor equipment and encourage one another in their work and play. All pupils have a developing sense of community as they visit and perform at the local elderly day-care centre. They regularly raise money for SOS Children's Village in Botswana, Mencap, The Children's Society and for Red Nose Day.

44. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school is committed to providing opportunities for pupils to nurture their understanding of their own and other cultural heritage. The Acorn Gallery offers an in-school opportunity to see first hand the works of local artists, from the region. The gallery contains original works along with descriptions about the artists and their background. There are many books about various artists, attractively displayed, as well as many framed works of art throughout the school. In art lessons pupils have had the opportunity to discuss Adire Eloko cloth and have produced Nigerian starch/batik prints of a high standard. Reception classes have visited a local park as well as the local village Brook and have produced quality pieces of work in knowledge and understanding of the world and art.
45. The school is well resourced with a wide range of books, many of which support cultural diversity and promote race equality. Two French clubs are run during lunchtimes and these are very popular and have a waiting list. The library club for pupils in Year 2 is well attended. Pupils produce attractive displays and interesting critical commentaries on the latest books that are available in the library, which is well resourced. The school encourages visits from culturally diverse groups and these have included 'Kala Sangam' – a performing arts group from the Asian community. The school recognises the need to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society and provides enriching experiences for them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. This is a caring school. It makes good provision to ensure pupils' welfare and is successful in its aims to nurture children's personal development and value each individual. The caring and supportive environment found at the previous inspection has been maintained. Parents in the playground said that they were pleased with the care their children receive and that their children were happy at school. The very positive relationships between staff and pupils have also been maintained.
47. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory overall. Child protection procedures are very good. Staff have been trained and are aware of the need to be vigilant. The school carries out risk assessments but some concerns were brought to the attention of the school and were addressed immediately or put on the agenda for the near future. The school has made good provision for access of pupils with disabilities. Several members of staff are trained in first aid and any accidents are addressed immediately and recorded in the accident book. The school has strict guidelines for the administering of medicines. Fire drills are carried out regularly.
48. The importance of attendance is highlighted to parents in the home/school agreement and the procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Attendance has remained above the national average since the previous inspection. The school discourages holidays taken in term time and there is no unauthorised absence.
49. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. The policy promotes positive behaviour and allows the class teacher to decide the procedures for rewards in the class. Praise, smiley faces, and stars are awarded to individual pupils and groups of pupils are rewarded appropriately for good behaviour. The use of 'Golden Time' on a Friday further rewards and supports good behaviour. Pupils are aware of the standards expected of them and most respond accordingly. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good with an array of effective sanctions. A positive environment is created with the use of special rewards. The use of yellow and red cards denotes the loss of 'Golden Time' during the end of week activities. Any incident of anti-social behaviour is addressed immediately. The school has an effective policy and procedures for dealing with bullying, and no incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection.

50. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Staff know their pupils well and provide good personal support and guidance. The very positive relationships between pupils and staff encourage good attitudes to each other and visitors to the school. Pupils volunteer to help in class and act as monitors for taking registers. Circle time encourages expression of thoughts and feelings and is also used to support good health in the pupils. Golden Time rewards pupils for good behaviour. Personal development is recorded appropriately in the annual reports. The majority of parents who returned questionnaires agreed that their children like school and that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.
51. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and supported well so that all pupils are helped to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The special educational needs co-ordinator uses a range of assessments to achieve this. Targets are drawn up and individual education plans compiled by teachers in close collaboration with the special education needs co-ordinator. These are subject to frequent reviews to ensure that they remain appropriate.
52. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and performance are satisfactory overall. Other than National Curriculum Tests, no other formal tests are conducted although diagnostic assessments are made for pupils with special educational needs. Samples of work are kept to illustrate progress, for example, the "blue assessment books" in writing. Subject co-ordinators gather information about pupils' progress in a variety of ways, through the collection of samples of work, observations, photographic evidence and teachers planning. In year teams, teachers discuss pupils' progress. The school operates a rolling programme for monitoring standards in each subject. These are conducted regularly on a half-termly basis and monitored by each planning group. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Teachers know their pupils well and generally share the planned learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons. This provides a secure base to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of the lessons. Together with the input of support staff, this forms the basis against which pupils' gains in skills and knowledge, as well as understanding are judged.
53. The use of this assessment information is underdeveloped. The school is beginning to use an assessment program to track pupils' progress from baseline assessment on entry and to predict results by the end of Year 2. This program will systematically identify the progress of individual pupils as well as groups of pupils and identify those who are doing better than expected or those who require additional support. However, this is not fully implemented at present. Therefore although teachers know about pupils in their class there is no whole school over view at present to collate the ongoing assessed evidence so that the school can measure its success against predicted targets. The use of assessment information is identified as an area for improvement in the school development plan. The school is aware of what needs to be done in order to achieve an effective whole school approach.
54. The areas of concern in the previous inspection identified that assessment in science was inadequate and that assessment was either weak or absent in other areas. Assessment is now satisfactory in science and appropriately established in other subjects. However, with no whole school co-ordination of assessment, consistency cannot be guaranteed. With no strategic overall system in place to carefully track progress made by individual pupils over their time in school achievement cannot be fully measured.
55. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils have good quality individual education plans, which are reviewed termly and specific targets are set. The special educational needs co-ordinator has good experience to judge the needs of pupils and seeks additional guidance when necessary. The learning support assistants are sufficiently well trained to support the needs of these pupils and to monitor and evaluate their day-to-day needs and progress. All pupils receive the help necessary to meet the targets identified in their individual

plans. These plans are taken into consideration when pupils are withdrawn for extra support with the special educational needs co-ordinator or support staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. The partnership between school and parents is very strong. Parents hold very high opinions of the education provided. A large majority of parents are very satisfied with all aspects of school life, have no concerns and feel very welcome in the school. They say they are very satisfied with the progress their children are making and how happy their children are to come to school. Parents in and around the school constantly praised the school's 'Open Door' policy. These very positive views have been maintained since the previous inspection.
57. Parents are pleased with all the information they receive. The quality of the written information is good. The regular newsletters contain information on all aspects of school life. Letters are sent from the School Association and governors to inform parents of forthcoming events and the governors make use of questionnaires to take parents' views into account. Pupils' annual reports are good, detailed, personal and informative, and meet all legal requirements. The school prospectus now meets legal requirements but the Governors' Annual Report to parents omits a new requirement. Staff send out written curriculum information each half term and school letters are now available on the Internet. Verbal information is also good. Two open evenings are held in the year, consultations with class teachers are held each term and two curriculum meetings are held, one for Reception year and one for Key Stage 1. There are very good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are kept fully informed of the progress of their children and invited to frequent reviews for target setting.
58. Parents make a very positive contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. The effect of the parents' involvement in the school is very good. A very large number of parents and grandparents help in the school. Activities include helping in science, cookery, art, dance and drama and school trips. Parents run 'The Book Savings Club', Sparklers, Share a Game and the Saturday morning Football Club. Parents give help for the float for the Feast Week parade. The School Association is small but very active and the social events they organise raise funds to provide welcome resources for the school, for example, water trays, puppet show play items and they provide refreshments for the leavers party. Parents strongly support the aims and ethos of the school and the Home/School agreement. Many parents and other family members hear children read at home and also complete their reading diaries. This is very valuable in helping to improve their literacy skills. The school has very effective links with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. Leadership and management by the head teacher and key staff are good. This is not quite as good as the judgement at the previous inspection. The head teacher's good leadership is driven by her very clear philosophy providing a climate in which pupils enjoy learning and work hard to achieve their best. This philosophy is shared by staff and implemented very well in the day-to-day life of the school. Assemblies, although not always fulfilling statutory requirements, taken over time make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and keep to the spirit of the law. In managing the school the head teacher is supported appropriately by the deputy head teacher and by a newly structured management team. Team leaders work well in year groups and ensure that management of the curriculum and planning are consistent across year groups. However, the quality of teaching and learning in each year group is not always monitored on a regular basis. Co-ordinators generally understand their roles well and manage their subjects effectively. Management of special educational needs and of the Foundation Stage are good. Teachers are clear about their responsibilities to classes and whole school issues. They know the standards that pupils in their classes achieve. However, with no

whole school co-ordination of assessment the school cannot measure its success against predicted targets. With no strategic overall system in place to carefully track progress made by individual pupils over their time in school achievement cannot be fully measured.

60. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good. Governors know the school well, and share the head teacher's philosophy. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive of the school. They have a very clear understanding of its main strengths and some of its weaknesses. Through their committee structure they work together in shaping the direction of the school effectively. However, there are some minor statutory requirements that are not fully implemented with regard to reporting to parents, care and the curriculum. Governors are committed to fulfilling their responsibilities effectively and ensuring that they carry out their duties on behalf of the school to the best of their abilities. There are effective subject links between governors and staff. Regular visits are properly prepared so that governors are clear about what they are to do. Governors give of their time generously and enthusiastically for the benefit of the school.
61. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and taking effective action is satisfactory. Most areas of the school are evaluated, sometimes with undue optimism, and priorities are identified in the school development plan and action plan but clear targets for raising standards are not set. The most important developments are not identified clearly enough, saying what staff will do rather than what pupils will achieve. Action is being taken to raise standards particularly in writing and more recently in information and communication technology.
62. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. This is enhanced by the considerable number of volunteer helpers in the school, mostly parents. Teachers have clear job descriptions and curriculum responsibilities. An effective appraisal system has been in place for some time, which has helped in the introduction of performance management for teaching staff. This has been integrated successfully in the last three years. Teachers work well as a team with the dedicated support staff, and this has contributed significantly to the good standards of behaviour, attitudes to learning and caring within the school. Teachers and support staff are provided with good training opportunities, within the limits of the budget, which are related primarily to the needs of the school. All of them are keen to enhance their professional development through appropriate training. Procedures for the induction and support of staff new to the school and for the training of new teachers are very good. Newly qualified teachers are particularly enthusiastic about the support and mentoring they received from staff in their first year of teaching. Students from Impington Village College come to the school for work experience. Trainee teachers from Homerton College undertake teaching practice at the school.
63. The school's educational priorities are supported through good financial planning. This represents a somewhat similar picture to the previous inspection when financial coverage was judged to be good. Budget decisions are driven by priorities in the School Development Plan and outside pressures, such as, the changing level of funding for pupils with special educational needs and less stability in the numbers on roll. The carry forward figure although currently slightly above recommended levels will be securely within the recommended levels when outstanding items have been paid. The finance committee meets on a regular basis, and monitors carefully the impact of expenditure on raising standards. This is achieved through general discussion and review. However, a more formal approach of setting specific targets by establishing success criteria could give a sharper focus to measuring the impact of expenditure on raising standards. This would be a positive move. Effective use is made of grants to support new initiatives and the quality of education for pupils.
64. The finance committee effectively applies principles of best value and is supported by the Local Education Authority that provides experience; expertise and guidance to ensure the finance committee can make their decisions with total objectivity. The Local Education Authority carefully monitors the use of grants to ensure that they are used for their designated purpose. The

recommendations of the last audit report were addressed immediately. The finances of the school are secure. The chairman of the finance committee provides good leadership in this area and collaborates well with other committees. The school's administrative staff carry out the day-to-day financial management of the school very effectively. Administrative procedures are well established and administrative staff are helpful to staff, pupils, parents and visitors. This contributes significantly to the smooth running of the school. The school uses its computerised systems in the office effectively to maintain all financial and school records. Procedures overall are unobtrusive and support the day-to-day running of the school. Funds allocated to support special educational needs are appropriately targeted.

65. The original school built in 1912 has had major extensions and refurbishments and is satisfactory overall. Facilities provided are adequate and the classes are of a good size. There are good areas for storage and a spacious library. The buildings are maintained and cleaned effectively by the premises staff. The school has had significant alterations to enable access for disabled pupils and parents. Ramps have been installed and a toilet has been converted. Key issues from the previous report have been addressed. Asbestos has been removed and a fire exit installed. The Foundation Stage classes now have covered outdoor areas and they use them frequently for their imaginative play. At present pupils need to use the narrow hall constantly as a thoroughfare, however, work is due to start this year on further improvements to the site, including a new hall and offices. The playground is divided into areas for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, there are markings for games, interesting items such as an island, a totem pole and small covered seating areas. Rain is inclined to puddle in the middle of the playground, as observed during a heavy down pour of rain following a dramatic thunderstorm. There is a secure pond and environmental area used in science and pleasant grassed areas with seating. The school uses the neighbouring field for lunchtime play and sporting activities whenever possible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. Histon and Impington Infant School is an effective school providing a good education for its pupils. Its strengths well outweigh its weaknesses. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in speaking, listening, mathematics, art and design, music and physical education. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. The head teacher has a very clear educational philosophy that is implicit in the day-to-day work of the school.

In order to sustain and improve even more the head teacher staff and governors should:

Raise standards in information and communication technology by

Ensuring that all pupils are given more frequent and regular opportunities to develop their information and communication skills. (Paragraph 7, 126)

Providing the subject co-ordinator with time to monitor standards. (Paragraph 130)

Increasing staff expertise by providing additional training or support where required. (Paragraph 126, 127)

Using information and communication technology more effectively in all subject areas. (Paragraph 91, 98, 106, 129)

Continuing to improve resources for the subject. (Paragraph 126)

Raise standards in writing so that more pupils achieve the higher level 3 by

Enabling more pupils to develop their writing across all areas of the curriculum. (Paragraph 4, 27, 32, 89)

Ensuring that more pupils use grammatical structure correctly and spell accurately. (Paragraph 31, 88)

Enabling more pupils to extend their ideas logically and use their good spoken vocabulary in their written work. (Paragraph 27, 89)

Improve the co-ordination of assessment information so that it is used more effectively to measure success against predicted targets by

Identifying a person to be responsible for assessment throughout the school. (Paragraph 53, 54 59, 92, 101)

Minor points

Governors to fulfil all minor statutory requirements with regard to their annual report to parents, and some aspects of care and the curriculum.

(Paragraph 47, 60, 72)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURE

ASSESSMENT UNIT

67. Provision for pupils is satisfactory overall, with many good features. It is not quite as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve well in social skills and interaction.
68. The Unit caters for ten pupils from the surrounding area who have learning, emotional, and/or social difficulties. There are currently three children of Reception age in the class, four in Year 1 and three in Year 2. They have their own class base, but good integration opportunities into their peer groups are organised. This integration occurs wherever possible but always takes the needs of individuals into account. During the inspection, the pupils were observed both in their classroom and during integrated lessons.
69. The Unit class is staffed with a teacher and five assistants hence the ratio of staff to pupils is very high. The accommodation in the Unit class is satisfactory. It is well presented with some good examples of pupils' work on display. An appropriate range of resources is available to meet the needs of the pupils, but the provision available for the youngest children is weak. There are too few areas for them to play in and not enough opportunities for them to begin to take autonomy in their learning, make choices, or move freely from one activity to another both indoors and outdoors. Because of this, provision does not fully meet their needs. The provision for older pupils is good. They benefit from the high staffing levels, the careful monitoring by staff and the good understanding of their particular difficulties and needs.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with many good features, including particular strengths in the understanding of individual needs and in the very positive relationships and support provided. Because of this, pupils feel secure and valued and their general attitudes and behaviour are good in relation to their difficulties. For example, they sit and listen well during story and music sessions, taking turns and sharing resources. During a circle time, pupils were observed passing some bells around the circle carefully and politely, enjoying the game very much. They benefit from the good contextual clues given by staff which help them to understand questions and give appropriate answers. Learning support assistants work hard to promote interaction and encourage positive learning skills. They contribute well to all aspects of the school day. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the pupils' difficulties is very good and there is clear awareness of the need for an approach that fosters socialisation and interaction which enables pupils to begin to manage their own behaviour. However, not enough attention is paid to the needs

of the different age groups, particularly the younger pupils who are usually expected to take part in the same activities and undertake the same work as the older pupils. This hinders their progress and there are occasions when they do not take part fully in the lessons. The quality of the planning is satisfactory, but there is a lack of detail relating to the expectations for each pupil. The lack of clear, specific and measurable targets as part of pupils' individual education plans is a weakness that inhibits opportunities to measure how well pupils are achieving over time. Assessment procedures are good, but the results of these assessments are not always used well enough to plan the next stage of learning.

71. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with particular strengths in the knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils and management of staff. However, not enough attention has been paid to monitoring the quality of pupils' individual education plans or to target setting to ensure that progress can be monitored and measured as pupils move through the Unit.
72. The overall curriculum provision is good for older pupils, with a good emphasis on literacy and social skills. Good structured sessions provide clear parameters within which pupils thrive because they know what is expected of them. The curriculum is less secure for Reception-aged children in particular, and the lack of provision tailored specifically for their needs leads to some off-task behaviour and examples of 'opting-out' because sessions are too long or too formal.
73. Pupils have equality of opportunity to all the activities on offer at the school and benefit from inclusive opportunities each week. They join the rest of the school for whole-school assembly; playtimes and lunchtimes on a daily basis, benefiting from peer group role models.
74. Some good links have been established with parents and the daily home/school diaries are a strength. Links with the local education authority support services are satisfactory with good speech and language therapy support that ensures advice; guidance and help are readily available. Transition arrangements are appropriate, with visits arranged prior to transfer to ensure success.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

54

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

37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	21	16	0	0	0
Percentage	0	31	39	30	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	254
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	57

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	51	40	91

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	49	46	46
	Girls	37	38	39
	Total	86	84	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (78)	92 (73)	93 (88)
	National	84(84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	45	46	47
	Girls	38	38	39
	Total	83	84	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (82)	92 (87)	95 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
218	0	0
0	0	0
15	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
11	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	266

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	01/02
	£
Total income	603.000
Total expenditure	590.000
Expenditure per pupil	2322

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	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
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	164

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	44	2	0.6	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	44	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	59	3	0.6	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	52	10	0.6	2
The teaching is good.	62	33	3	0.6	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	49	9	0.6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	33	5	0.6	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	49	5	0.6	3
The school works closely with parents.	37	46	14	1.2	2
The school is well led and managed.	37	50	5	1.8	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	46	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	43	24	4.9	5

Totals may not add up to 100% exactly because of rounding up or down.

Other issues raised by parents

Individual comments relating to the inspection framework, written on the back of questionnaires, have been addressed in relevant sections of the main report.

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

75. Organisation and provision in the Foundation Stage are good. Children coming into school have had a variety of pre-school experiences including nursery, playgroup, childminder and some children have none of these experiences. They are admitted into the Reception classes in the September of the year in which they become five. A carefully staggered programme of part time provision ensures that they settle quickly into school. This good induction programme enables children and staff to get to know each other well before full time entry into school by the October half term. This time is used to carry out appropriate baseline assessments, using the local education authority's guidelines. These assessments are used to identify individual children's needs and provide a curriculum that is relevant and imaginative. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has created a cohesive team, which is committed to the children in their care. They are ably supported by a number of general assistants, as well as many parent helpers.
76. The quality of teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage is consistently good and sometimes very good. Key features of the very good teaching are high expectations and planned activities that are carefully matched to the early learning goals and children's individual needs. Children show enthusiasm and usually display very good attention to learning and frequently become engrossed in activities. The climate for learning is good because good use is made of the quality resources available – including the outdoor area, where children often work with a very experienced nursery nurse in order to enhance physical and social development. Occasionally boisterous and noisy behaviour leads to limitations in children's learning.
77. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage varies from year to year but it is generally average overall. However, there is always a very wide range of attainment in each year group with a significant minority of children having above average communication, language and literacy skills and well developed personal and social skills whilst another small group of children have significant special educational needs. The majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. They are fully integrated in their classes and are supported well by carefully planned activities and good questioning. Effective general assistants support children's learning well.
78. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The team leader, who has been in post for one year, is developing her vision for this phase and has built a supportive and committed team. All team members have a good understanding of the 'stepping stones' leading to the early learning goals identified in the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan collaboratively, ensuring equal entitlement across the classes, and assess children's progress accordingly. Team meetings are regularly used for moderation and evaluative purposes. The Foundation Stage team leader regularly monitors planning but has had very limited opportunity to observe and monitor teaching and learning across the phase. This would enable her to focus on relative shortcomings and give opportunities to promote the very best features that result in very good learning. There are a large number of general assistants who work in this phase. Communication with them is good, as minutes of all meetings are shared so that they have a good understanding of their role and duties. They play an important part in the assessment of children, recording their observations and sharing them with the teacher at the end of lessons.

Personal, social and emotional development

79. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good and as a result children make good gains in their learning. The majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area and a significant

minority will exceed them. Children enter their class confidently, organise their belongings and sit quietly and talk to each other before the teacher joins them. Relationships with adults and peers are very good; they show appropriate respect, listen attentively and show consideration towards each other. They are encouraged to take part in the many imaginative and enjoyable activities that are available to them. Circle time is used well to give opportunities for all children to talk about what they like and how they feel. During one very good circle time planned around 'keeping healthy' all children spoke with confidence and good understanding. They showed empathy towards a child who had allergies to certain foods. Children entered the hall for a Foundation Stage assembly very quietly after being very noisy walking along the corridor. They had an understanding of the occasion, participated and responded well. Whilst in the classroom, children work well in a variety of settings. They play co-operatively and imaginatively in the 'Three Bears House' and enjoy socialising in the varied activities outside i.e. construction toys, water play, bikes and sandpit. They enjoy responsibility and are enthusiastic to be the 'special helper' who takes the register to the office. Movement around school is frequently noisy and some pupils show a lack of control but behaviour is generally good, sometimes very good, in the classrooms.

Communication, language and literacy

80. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Children start school with broadly average skills in this area of development, but with significant strengths in speaking and listening. The majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area. A significant minority will exceed them. They are attentive to the teacher, listen carefully and respond confidently. The many good opportunities provided throughout the school day enhance their developing communication skills. They speak clearly and audibly, with confidence and control and are able to employ language for a range of purposes. During a discussion, three children presented a positive view of the school as well as offering opinions about school uniform, playground behaviour and favourite lessons. Teachers actively encourage children to be confident in expressing themselves through the written word and provide a variety of opportunities for this, for example, filling in speech bubbles accompanying a picture of the wolf from the Three Little Pig's story. This initiated a time of discussion and the children thought of some very imaginative ideas. In some writing sessions children used capital letters in the middle of words, formed letters and wrote their names incorrectly. These remained uncorrected and opportunities were missed to reinforce basic writing skills and insist on consistent use of correctly formed letters. In the better teaching more attention is paid to correct letter formation, with clear progression from tracing over the teachers writing, copy writing and independent work and children know what needs to be done to improve. There is a very positive approach to fostering a love of reading. Children enjoy daily sessions of reading class library books. They handle books with care and take their own reading book home daily. Included in their book bags is a useful pamphlet for parents outlining ways in which they can help at home, as well as a comprehensive record sheet for parents and teacher to record their comments. Story time is used as an occasion to enrich children's learning and love of literacy and language. It includes the reading of short stories and enthusiastic singing of familiar rhymes and songs. Children respond very positively to teachers' lively and responsive styles. This creates a very happy learning experience at the end of a busy day.

Mathematical development

81. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Provision for mathematical development is good and as a result children make good gains in their learning. By the end of the reception year most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for mathematical development, with a significant minority working within National Curriculum Level 1. Teachers know their children well and use questions skilfully in order to involve all children. Children are given a variety of well-planned activities that encourage a positive attitude towards mathematics. They count with confidence up to 15 and beyond and most try to count backwards with a degree of accuracy. They recognise simple 2D shapes and higher attaining pupils identify cubes, cuboids

and spheres, edges, corners and sides. Good teaching helps children to understand the concept of estimation, which is described as a 'thinking guess'. They estimate the number of sandwiches in a pile, before counting and matching on a one-to-one basis. In small group work the teacher used 'I'm thinking of a shape' as a basis for prompting children's thinking effectively. Similar lessons were observed in each class showing good collaborative planning and consistency of entitlement across the classes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Provision for development in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and as a result children make good gains in their learning. The majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area and a significant minority are likely to exceed them. Teachers ensure that knowledge and understanding of the world is an integral part of the planned activities for each week. The thematic approach to learning based around the 'Three Little Pigs' ensures that a variety of experiences are available to children. They discussed the route that the wolf took to the pig's house in some detail. In developing this idea further, they drew a route and described it accurately i.e. the route to the head teacher's office. Children enjoy using the computers in the classes and freely choose this as an optional activity. They identify the mouse, monitor, screen and keyboard. They have well developed click and drag skills and place unwanted items in the 'bin'. They produce well-formed street maps, record their names and with help save the pieces of work. They have a good basic knowledge on which to build as they move up the school. The visits to the local village Brook and country park have provided teachers with opportunities to broaden children's experiences. They have looked carefully at reflections in the water and have produced very good observational drawing – even including the rippled effect of the reflection. Detailed displays about water show that children have investigated it thoroughly, used all their senses and a variety of tools and techniques to record their findings. Registration and circle times are pleasant times, skilfully used by teachers to encourage children to talk about events of personal significance. Children show interest in the lives of their friends and teachers.

Physical development

83. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good sometimes very good. Children are given ample confidence in this area of learning and make good progress as a result of good teaching. They use a wide variety of resources that promote fine and gross motor skills. They also make use of the outdoor area, with a full range of bikes, scooters and other equipment, whenever possible. Good opportunities are available to practise manipulation using pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and simple tools. All children undress and dress themselves with minimal help from adults. Children have an understanding of the need to warm up their bodies before exercising and are developing good spatial awareness. They respond very well to the teachers' quiet and controlled instructions that encourages them to listen carefully. In a very good lesson, the general assistant took an active part by joining in with the children, thus acting as a good role model. At one point the teacher handed over the lead in the lesson to her, showing a very good relationship between the two and confirming the school's philosophy in the importance of general assistants. At one point the general assistant worked with a very insecure lower attaining child. She did this sensitively, encouraging and praising the child for trying hard. Following this she made a record of the child's attainment. This is very good practice. During a very good dance lesson children responded to the stimulus of music of African origin. Five children confidently demonstrated their own creative interpretation whilst the rest of the class observed. There was a good display of movements ranging from slow to quick, at different levels and using different shapes. A final performance by each half of the class gave opportunities for peer evaluation, which was a valuable tool for further improvements. Overall, individual performances were imaginative, controlled and communicated feelings in response to the music. The children are successful in meeting the early learning goals for this area of learning and a significant minority are likely to exceed them.

Creative development

84. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good sometimes very good. Children learn effectively as a result of good teaching and the whole school emphasis on the creative areas. All three Reception classes produce a richly creative environment. There is a variety of quality artwork in each room displayed in imaginative and child friendly ways. Very good opportunities are planned for all children to explore a range of media and materials. Adults determine most tasks so that children can learn to use equipment correctly and discover what materials can be used for. Pastel drawings of spring flowers show very good observations skills and attention to detail. Pencil drawings of a visit to the local pond show growing pencil control. A large display based on the jungle consists entirely of children's work, where they have mixed powder paints to the colours of their choosing before painting easily recognisable jungle animals. When mixing powder paints children describe colours carefully i.e. "this is a very reddish brown, I have used too much red in it". Opportunities are given for enrichment, based on a developing theme – in a play area the children are creating a background scene of trees, leaves and spiders, making use of a variety of media and techniques including printing, weaving and sewing. This is a very effective concept and entirely the children's own work. The nursery nurse is used effectively to promote children's creative development through a dedicated play area, housing 'The Three Bear's Cottage', where children re-enact the story. They relate well to each other and use these times to build on positive relationship with their friends. The teachers and general assistants know their children well and take every opportunity to further develop their language skills through creative play. A large number of parents support creative activities and they too relate well to the children, taking time to talk to them about their work. Creative development is a strength of the school and all children are on track to achieve the early learning goals with a significant minority working beyond this level.

ENGLISH

85. In this inspection standards of attainment in reading and writing were found to be similar to the national average overall. Standards are better in speaking, listening and reading than in writing. Speaking is a particular strength. At the previous inspection standards were reported to be above average overall but with a similar range, reading being better than writing. A significant number of pupils are likely to achieve the higher level 3 in reading this year. However, there are a number of pupils with special educational needs, who are less likely to achieve higher levels, but nevertheless make good progress. Standards achieved over the past few years have varied. Standards in reading have been consistently above those in writing. Overall pupils make good progress although progress is better in speaking and listening and reading than writing. Progress is good for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. They are clearly identified and given appropriate support in the classroom and in small groups.
86. By the end of Year 2 the majority of pupils achieve above average standards in speaking and listening some are well above average. This is because of the good planned opportunities provided to enhance their vocabulary and to offer them frequent chances to speak to each other in class, for example, when talking with speaking partners in literacy lessons, and in some plenary sessions when teachers challenge pupils to explain their work and how it could be improved. In story sessions teachers discuss interesting points and encourage pupils to answer questions clearly and express their own ideas and opinions. Pupils feel valued and they are eager to contribute to lessons they are confident that their views will be accepted and appreciated by all. Skills in listening are developed well through story time and the introduction to lessons when pupils are expected to behave well and listen politely to the teacher and to others in the class. In assemblies pupils are attentive and develop their listening skills further. Most pupils in Year 2 speak

confidently and clearly whilst obeying the conventions of discussion, by listening politely to each other and waiting their turn to speak.

87. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils achieve average standards in reading although many will be above average. Throughout the school pupils enjoy hearing teachers read to them with expression and pleasure, pupils emulate these good examples and many are very expressive readers. Often at the end of a busy day story time allows pupils the chance to share a quiet imaginative period, developing a love of books and an understanding of the variety of styles and authors available to them. As they move through the school pupils develop good reading strategies, including a good knowledge of punctuation and of what each symbol means. Pupils know that the cover of a book gives a full range of information about what it might contain. They are happy to select the books that they want to read. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and talk about the library and favourite books they have at home. Most pupils read with confidence and understanding developing appropriate reading strategies to tackle unknown words. They use the pictures as clues, make informed guesses, and sound out words or split them up. Higher attaining readers self correct quickly if an error is made. As a result of the support given to pupils in the use of the library they understand the use of contents, index and alphabetic order. Older pupils know how to find a book and to gather information from non-fiction books. As well as guided reading in small groups teachers hear individuals read on a one to one basis and use the home school diaries well to share information with parents.
88. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards in writing. However, far fewer achieve the higher level 3 than in reading, only 4 percent last year. The best writers use a neat cursive script that is easily read, this is not the case for all pupils some of whom produce letters that are not always uniform in size and shape. Pupils are taught to form individual letters correctly in handwriting lessons but they do not always use these skills when writing in other lessons. Most pupils in Year 2 produce well-spaced words in sentences that begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. However, many pupils do not always use the correct grammatical structure or spell accurately enough, although some spell commonly used words with sufficient knowledge of letter sounds for the meaning to be clear.
89. Many pupils actively seek to use words and phrases that interest the reader. During a very good lesson in which pupils wrote letters to a famous author, the learning objective was to focus on “super sentences” to check if the sentence was punctuated correctly and made sense to the reader. Pupils worked hard to achieve the learning objective and many were successful in producing “super sentences”. This careful thought and emphasis on written work does not always extend sufficiently into other subject areas such as history or geography. Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to extend their ideas logically and use their good spoken vocabulary in their written work. Some pupils who need extra support are provided for well, through the Early Literacy Strategy, this enables them to benefit from small group work and a good level of individual support.
90. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They are enthusiastic and apply themselves readily to their work. Pupils work hard and stay on task. Most are keen to do their best. Teachers generally share the lesson objectives with pupils so that they know what is expected of them. Pupils settle quickly at the beginnings of lessons so that they start without delay. Pupils particularly enjoy listening to stories and reading books.
91. The quality of observed teaching and learning is good. Teachers classroom organisation and management of pupils is effective and this, coupled with very good relationships, means that all pupils are usually fully engaged in activities. Pupils share materials well, co-operate and collaborate willingly. The pace of lessons is appropriate to the work undertaken. However, in some lessons, pupils sit for too long on the carpet during lesson introductions, they get fidgety and behaviour deteriorates, consequently they do not have sufficient time in plenaries to recap and consolidate learning objectives. Links with information and communication technology are not

identified sufficiently to help pupils' learning across this subject area. This is identified as an area for improvement.

92. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is hard working and enthusiastic. She has effectively overseen the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. She has monitored the quality of teaching and learning in each class and drawn up an effective evaluation of English that identifies writing as a priority in the school. Standards are discussed regularly and assessment procedures are well established. Analysis of statutory test results gives clear pointers to the areas that require improvement. However, the co-ordinator does not have an overview of assessment information across the school. Therefore is unable to predict accurately results for each year group so that the school can measure success against predicted targets.
93. The library and project books are co-ordinated effectively by a different member of staff. The library is attractive well organised and a focal point for pupils and adults. It is used well by pupils. Books are highly valued in school and many opportunities are provided for pupils to enjoy them. A good range of project books has been established to support the topic areas covered by pupils in different year groups. The library is particularly well resourced, with a wide range of books, fiction and non-fiction, including a large selection of 'big books' and story sacks for teachers. It also includes a well-stocked staff resources area.

MATHEMATICS

94. The results of National Curriculum tests show that standards in mathematics have been consistently above average for the past three years. In the 2002 tests 35 percent of pupils achieved the higher level 3, reflecting good achievement for this group of pupils compared to their slightly below average baseline assessment. It is likely that this year standards will still be above average overall but with fewer pupils achieving the level 3. This is because there is a very wide range of ability in this year group and whilst the school does succeed well in enabling a significant number of pupils to achieve the higher level 3, there are a number of pupils with special education needs, who are less likely to achieve the higher level, but nevertheless make good progress. Standards were well above average in 2000 and above average in 2001 and 2002. Overall pupil progress is good, it is better in number work, to which the school devotes great attention, than other areas of mathematics. Standards have been effectively maintained since the previous inspection.
95. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. Good teaching is improving pupils' numeracy skills, particularly their mental recall of number facts, which is shown daily in brisk openings to lessons that encourage pupils to be alert and lively. Much practical task work concentrates on numeracy problems and the application of this knowledge to problem solving and use of the four rules in daily life. There is less evidence of recorded work in shape, space and measures, partly because of the school's strong belief that pupils gain their knowledge and understanding through discussion and practical activities as against recording.
96. Pupils in Year 1 attain standards in mathematics at least as expected and build on the good start they have in Reception classes. Throughout Years 1 and 2 the great majority of pupils achieve according to their ability, many achieving the higher level 3. Some of these higher attaining pupils work quickly and accurately and are keen and enthusiastic to have challenging work set for them. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress, because they have work well suited to their abilities and receive considerable support from general assistants either individually or in groups.
97. Most pupils in Year 1 have a secure grasp of number. With some guidance most add 6 and 13 by counting on, and work out how many you add to 7 to make 18. Some get confused when taking away, although they know mathematical language such as minus and subtract; their workbooks

show that about half of them can work out $24 - 9$ and $23 - 5$ correctly. Other pupils, using scales, calculate using unifix blocks, how many they must add to 5 to make 8 etc. Some pupils take insufficient care with their recording, and a few, if not working directly with an adult, are easily distracted and do not finish their tasks.

98. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils rapidly work out mentally that 42 take away 12 is 30 and that 30 can be made with 5 fives, 2 twos and a 1. They are beginning to understand how to count on to solve double digit addition and subtraction (65-59, 83-18). One more able pupil quickly worked out $312 - 274$, by counting on with 26, and then 12 to reach 38, which was considerably in advance of other 'counting on' activities. Pupils are especially adept at explaining how they reach their answers, which whilst not always logical are generally very articulate. Examination of their recorded work (mainly on worksheets) shows generally satisfactory knowledge of measures, capacity, fractions up to $\frac{1}{3}$, simple shapes and a little data through block graphs. The school has relevant mathematical software for use on the computers, but during the inspection little use of this was observed, or was apparent in work seen.
99. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They talk enthusiastically about their work and lessons. They are always keen to answer questions and usually listen well to each other's explanations. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, but some pupils tend to go off task and chat or distract each other in group work when an adult is not present to guide them. They can also be distracted by the coming and going of pupils in the class to support groups or other learning activities. The outcome of this is that they do not always do themselves justice in the presentation of their work, and sometimes make careless mistakes or don't do as much as expected. When in plenaries, though, they invariably revert to their earlier attentiveness and eagerness to answer.
100. The quality of observed teaching and learning is good overall. The best teaching is characterised by the calm and quiet approach that maintains focus and concentration in carpet sessions, good subject knowledge and strong and effective contributions from general assistants. Teachers work and plan together in parallel classes and usually provide work for at least three different levels of ability. This ensures consistent and generally suitably challenging work for all pupils. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and are always offering words of praise and encouragement. There is very little written developmental comment in marking; most work is marked, usually with a tick, but some pupils do a considerable number of repetitive calculations of the same type when they obviously know what they are doing. Teachers know their pupils well and keep individual class records of pupil progress.
101. The co-ordinator has ensured that resources for mathematics are good in terms of range, quality and quantity, and provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. She has effectively overseen the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. She has been able to monitor teaching and learning in classes, as well as monitoring planning and pupil work. An analysis of the standard assessment tests took place last year, so certain aspects could be identified for attention. However, the co-ordinator does not have an overview of assessment information across the school and therefore is unable to predict accurately results for each year group so that the school can measure success against predicted targets.

SCIENCE

102. Teacher assessments in National Curriculum tests of 2002 showed that standards were average overall with a greater number of pupils than average achieving the higher level 3 particularly in investigative and experimental work. Inspection evidence suggests that it is likely that standards will be similar this year but with fewer pupils achieving the higher level 3 because there is a very wide range of ability in this year group. Whilst the school does succeed well in enabling a significant number of pupils to achieve the higher level 3, there are a number of pupils with special education needs, who are less likely to achieve the higher level, but nevertheless make good

progress. Standards are similar to the previous inspection. An area for development identified in the previous inspection was the insufficient progress pupils achieved in the investigative aspect of science. This issue has been particularly well addressed and pupils in both year groups are provided with many opportunities to improve their investigative and experimental skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, interact well with teachers and general assistants and respond well to the provision provided for them.

103. There are strengths in pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things. The conservation area is used effectively to give a particular focus to this aspect of science, together with the use of appropriate video material that provides visual experiences for pupils to study and extend their knowledge and understanding in this area. In a Year 2 lesson pupils watched a video before carrying out an investigation into the differences and similarities between leaves and recorded their findings using their own criteria appropriately. Practical activities reinforced their understanding well.
104. Appropriate time is allocated to the development of the skills of scientific enquiry and this aspect is developing well. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, pupils investigated different ways of making sounds. In Year 2, pupils studied the use of force in push and pull experiments and discovered which surface allows a car to travel the furthest distance. Pupils also investigated effectively which materials would conduct electricity. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to give reasons for their opinions based on what they have observed.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are increasingly practical and this is making learning more interesting. Pupils stay on task as a result. Suitable focus is placed on pupils' learning from first hand experiences wherever possible and this is effective. Pupils have positive attitudes to science; they collaborate well and share ideas of how to record their work, for example, in the lesson comparing similarities and differences of various leaves. Teachers target individual pupils with specific questions to make sure that everyone is involved in discussions. This allows them to assess the pupils' thinking and to plan further suitable learning. Opportunities provided for working in pairs encourages the use of appropriate vocabulary and promotes moral and social development.
106. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator identifies priorities for improvement based on assessment and discussion with other staff. Staff training has taken place and a successful science week was undertaken recently. Assessment procedures are now in place and analysis of results and end of unit tests are beginning to provide information about the standards that pupils are achieving. The co-ordinator monitors teachers planning, and has had some opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and plans are in place to extend this monitoring. Resources are generally good. However, during the week of the inspection there was no use of computers to support learning in the subject. Links with information and communication technology are not identified in the planning to support pupils' learning across this subject area. This is identified as an area for improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

107. There is a strong emphasis on the arts throughout the school and consequently pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally for their age. Good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Some pupils achieve well above average standards. All pupils are fully included in artistic activities.
108. Pupils get a rich variety of opportunities to explore artistic techniques and skills. In Year 1, pencil drawings of a bicycle are very well done, with careful attention given to detail. They have studied batik, using hot wax and starch methods and have produced clearly defined individual and

collaborative samples. Pupils have used 'brusho' dyes to create backgrounds on material and then created detailed and imaginative block prints of fish for underwater scenes.

109. In Year 2, pupils had the opportunity to discuss the different styles of Paul Klee, Piet Mondrian and Kasimir Malevich during an introduction to an information and communication technology lesson. Pupils identify that these artists use regular shapes to create pictures. They recognise features included in each of the artist work i.e. symmetry and use of primary colours. They link previous learning about 'contrast' (in music) to Mondrian's work and discuss this in some detail. However, due to the limited number of computers and variety of software in the classrooms only a few children were observed having the opportunity to experiment with art through information and communication technology.
110. The extensive work on display throughout the whole school covering many areas of the curriculum reinforces the emphasis given to the arts. The current exhibition in the Acorn Gallery provides pupils and visitors to the school with the opportunity to view original pieces of artwork, which include watercolours, pottery, greetings cards, jewellery and textiles. This high quality feature successfully enables children to identify with local artists, who are willing to demonstrate their skills and give pupils the opportunity to join extend their learning.
111. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall sometimes it is very good. In the better lessons teachers share the learning objective and encourage pupils to make detailed observations before showing them techniques that can be used. In drawing still life Year 2 pupils use their good speaking skills to discuss the finer details of a flower before making marks on the paper. Good teacher knowledge and understanding of the subject enables them to make well-informed comments that help pupils to improve their work. Very good use of the review session at the end of the lesson gives pupils an opportunity to appraise both their own and other pupils work. They do this sensitively and take great pride in their work. All pupils are fully included in activities.
112. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding and practical knowledge of the subject and has monitored provision as well as the teaching and learning of art across all year groups. Effective assessment procedures are in place and samples of work are collected to illustrate an aspect, i.e. colour mixing and mark making. As a result of her monitoring the co-ordinator has reintroduced sketchbooks, which are now used consistently across the whole school. The use of information and communication technology in art is limited and the co-ordinator recognises that this is an area for further development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are expected nationally for their age at 7. Standards were reported to be above average at the previous inspection. All pupils are fully included in design and technology activities.
114. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection but scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they generate their own ideas and plan what to do based on previous experiences. They make use of words and illustrations to describe their designs and select different materials to work with. Pupils assemble and join materials appropriately in a variety of ways. There are good links with other curriculum areas. For example, in history pupils' studies are supported well. Pupils made attractive and effective working models of castles, which included raising and lowering portcullises. They made a large and attractive castle collage and in this case linked their work effectively to literacy, by writing interesting and exciting stories about knights and their castle adventures, to display along side their models. Another good example of supporting literacy and enjoying poetry, included activities related to reading, "Rumble in the Jungle". Pupils made jungle animals using newspaper and sellotape as a base then covering this with modelling material

and allowing it to dry before painting the animals in jungle colours and patterns effectively. Good use is made of the design and technology area where the ample resources are stored efficiently they include a well-used cooking area complete with oven, sink and complete range of utensils. Pupils in discussion displayed positive attitudes to the subject.

115. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum and has produced a comprehensive and easily accessible plan for colleagues. This ensures coverage of the subject by each year group. A scheme of work is in place. The co-ordinator assesses work undertaken in the school by recording photographic evidence to confirm coverage of all areas. The co-ordinator has had no opportunity as yet to monitor teaching and learning in the subject. The use of information and communication technology is limited and the co-ordinator recognises that this is an area for further development. Staff know their pupils well and record achievement appropriately in reports to parents. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. An audit of resources is identified as a priority in the school development plan.

GEOGRAPHY

116. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are expected nationally for their age. This is a similar picture to that of the previous inspection.
117. Year 1 pupils investigate the local area throughout the school year and progressively develop their skills and knowledge, for example, a pupil recognised and named a photograph of King's College, Cambridge, another knew that the river that flows through Cambridge is the Cam. Pupils are beginning to show an awareness of places beyond their own locality and a pupil recognised a picture of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. During a practical lesson in the playground the majority of pupils identified North, South, East and West correctly and knew that a weather vane showed the direction of the wind. Most knew what a compass was used for.
118. Year 2 pupils, have compared living in another country, Peru, with life in Cambridge, and in the inspection were investigating an island locality, the fictional Isle of Struay, with their own environment appropriately. One pupil had very good knowledge of the author, her origins and the Isle of Coll, upon which the story is based. Others had interesting examples of what the Isle might not have - 'brownies' and 'cricket nets', while another pupil defined a landscape as 'land that is safe to walk on'. Pupil discussions and factual knowledge about geography are generally more precise than their writing, which is sometimes untidy and mostly confined to worksheets.
119. The quality of observed teaching and learning during the inspection was good. Teachers set clear learning objectives, manage their pupils well and have good questioning skills, which encourage pupils' speaking and thinking skills. This shows in their enthusiastic response, nearly all being eager to talk with their partner and investigate their tasks. The recording of their work, whilst mostly accurate factually, is not always corrected appropriately.
120. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has imaginative and ambitious ideas for the further development of the subject. A governor has won a £2000 'Awards for All' grant for a landscaping project in the school grounds. This includes a pond and raised beds; staff, pupils and parents, have been involved in developing the area. The co-ordinator carefully monitors planning and samples of work, although she has had little opportunity to observe teaching and learning. She has introduced an agreed policy, scheme of work and assessment guidelines, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Resources are generally adequate with the exception of a few items such as compasses, which would help the practical

teaching of the subject. The limited skills of pupils and lack of resources in information and communication technology is an area for improvement.

HISTORY

121. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are expected nationally for their age at 7. This is a similar picture to that at the previous inspection. All pupils are fully included in history lessons.
122. Although no lessons took place in history during the week, conversations with pupils confirmed their enthusiasm for history and the 'hands on' approach which their teachers provide effectively. Pupils are keen to learn and have good recall of their experiences in history.
123. Analysis of pupils' work shows satisfactory progress in learning and the development of their historical skills. History is linked carefully to other aspects of the curriculum, for example, in Year 2 in their study of castles, they have made model castles and a large castle collage, and have written exciting stories about knights and their castle adventures. Cross-curricular links are a recurring feature of the teaching of history. In a geography lesson in the playground, Year 1 pupils looked at local landmarks and at the external features of the school, such as, the date. They tried to understand that in 1912 the school was built. Likewise on their walks around the village Year 2 pupils not only learn about routes, but also the differences between old and new houses.
124. Year 2 pupils complete worksheets about famous people appropriately such as Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling and they record important points in their lives appropriately. Great emphasis is placed on practical experiences so pupils learn readily about the local 'Histon Giant' by examining his very large boot; this experience was enhanced by the fact that two pupils were distant relatives and were clearly observed by pupils to be taller than most of them. The school also promotes learning through visits to places of historical interest such as Stibbington, and especially through practical activities such as comparing artefacts.
125. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Planning is appropriate and linked well to the scheme of work. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils work, but has little opportunity to directly monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The use of information and communication technology to support history is underdeveloped. There is now an agreed policy and scheme of work for history, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. More emphasis is given to practical experiences and speaking about them than is given to recording their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. Standards of attainment are below those expected nationally and lower than reported at the previous inspection. The school recognises that it has not kept pace with technological advancement in providing adequate resources to enable sufficient pupil entitlement. However, they have recently bought twelve new PC's and these have been installed in classrooms throughout the school, bringing the number to two in each class. Unfortunately these are not yet networked but will be as part of the county plan in spring 2004. The school chooses to have differing software and at the moment only two PC's in the library have Internet access. This means that teachers are limited in their style of delivery and pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop and practise their skills, or to explore the World Wide Web. Staff are still familiarising themselves with the new hardware and software and some lack confidence and understanding of the new programs. A published scheme of work has been purchased and is used systematically by staff for medium and short term planning. Assessment procedures are limited and consist of a tick list from the published scheme. These are not dated and provide insufficient

information to confirm pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in order to move them on with sufficient accuracy for their individual levels of success.

127. The quality of teaching and learning over time is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers' skills vary and some require further training on the new hardware and software. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers have sound subject knowledge and use appropriate vocabulary. They use careful questioning to reinforce previous learning and demonstrate the necessary skills well, outlining possible difficulties that pupils may encounter. However, sometimes because the whole class have to stand or sit around one monitor some pupils lose concentration, as they are unable to see the screen properly, and have to sit for too long. General assistants and parents are frequently used to support pupils working on the computer, but sometimes do not allow pupils to perform simple tasks like opening a program or saving their own work.
128. In Year 2 some pupils are able to use straight line and geometric shape tools to create pictures in the style of Piet Mondrian. They choose a colour and flood fill a shape but require help in saving their work. They click and drag objects with some accuracy. In Year 1, some pupils enter data into a program in order to produce a pictogram on musical instruments, but the data is made up as they go along and is not the result of previous data gathering. This was a missed opportunity to link previous learning in other subjects i.e. music and maths, to information and communication technology. Little or no opportunity is taken to build on the skills developing in the Foundation Stage. There is very limited evidence of word processing throughout the school. In discussions with a small group of pupils only one of them felt confident about word processing, saving and printing.
129. Overall, computers were only observed in use in one quarter of all lessons, across all subjects. There was very little recorded evidence of information and communication technology work on display or in books. This illustrates the limited use of information and communication technology in the school. However, with more resources and better provision standards are likely to rise as pupils progress through the school.
130. Leadership and management of the subject are now satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post for 18 months and is developing a vision for the future. She has not had the opportunity to monitor standards in the subject as yet. Another teacher has responsibility for the interesting school website. Both are committed to improving information and communication technology throughout the school for pupils and staff and ensuring its regular use in the teaching of other subjects. A full audit of resources has been completed and plans are in place to audit staff needs and competences. Working with a local authority adviser and head teacher, the co-ordinator has produced an action plan for the subject, which is identified as a priority in the school development plan. Both head teacher and co-ordinator have visited other schools in order to view good practice and have adjusted their action plans accordingly. The co-ordinator manages the budget for the subject well, carefully checking for best value.

MUSIC

131. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally. This is a similar picture to that at the previous inspection. All pupils are fully included in musical activities. Clearly the philosophy to develop pupils' artistic skills is high on the school's agenda and pupils are continually provided with many opportunities to learn, understand and appreciate music.
132. Pupils' performing skills are very good. Opportunities are provided at various times, but particularly at Christmas, for pupils to display their musical talents. They speak, sing, act and move with confidence and poise. Their performances are well disciplined and they act and sing well. In an assembly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, participated in high

quality music making involving singing in two parts, percussion accompaniment and choral singing. This made a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of school and contributed well to their spiritual development. Pupils appraise music on a regular basis and care is taken to provide pupils with a variety of music, particularly during assemblies. Composition skills are being developed well, pupils understanding the basic elements, such as short, long, high, low, fast and slow. A parent, who is a music teacher, came into school and explained and demonstrated the mechanics of the piano; how strings could be plucked, the relationship between high notes and short strings and low notes and long strings and the effect of the pedals to produce loud and soft notes. Pupils were intrigued, listened carefully, answered and asked questions and learned musical terms effectively.

133. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and expertise to plan lessons that develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding. The strong focus given to pupils' listening to different styles of music is carefully interwoven into other subjects, such as dance in physical education where pupils respond to the mood of the music and move to their emotions. Resources and time are used well. In all lessons observed there were sufficient instruments for pupils to have one each. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the support they receive and benefit from the good provision.
134. Leadership and management of the subject are good. All pupils in school participate in visiting workshops and listen to string, brass and woodwind ensembles. Recently Year 2 pupils visited The Royal Opera House in London to see 'Giselle'. The scheme of work is appropriate and meets curricular requirements. Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out on a regular basis, but as yet, assessment is informal. A peripatetic teacher offers tuition to pupils whose parents desire it and supports music taught by school staff. Resources are good overall and include instruments from non-European cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally. This is a similar picture to that at the previous inspection. All pupils are fully included in physical education activities. No lessons were observed in gymnastics but lessons seen in games and dance were of high quality resulting in good standards.
136. In all lessons pupils use space well when moving around the hall or the field, working independently or with a partner. They consider carefully their own and others safety during rigorous warm up sessions. Very good social skills are demonstrated when pupils wait their turn or are observing and evaluating the performance of others. In dance, pupils respond very well to the music, interpreting the mood and rhythm through the creation of imaginative shapes and movements, which are individual and of high quality. In games, pupils acquire the skills of passing and receiving very well using both hands and feet. They work well together in groups and pairs and display good concentration throughout the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to make up their own criteria for passing, whilst other pupils observe and have to decide what that criteria is. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the skills required in various activities. Pupils from the school have been involved with those from Histon Junior School and Impington Village College in a dance project, performed on stage at the college.
137. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Effective teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge, enabling pupils to develop their skills creatively and to respond independently. In dance, opportunities are provided for pupils to consider how they can improve their skills and movement sequences. Pupils evaluate their own work and that of others, identifying what they have done well. All lessons proceed at a brisk pace and pupils concentrate well as a result. Pupils are encouraged to collect their own apparatus. They do this sensibly and safely. This practice makes a good contribution to promoting pupils' social and moral development. Pupils clearly enjoy their physical education lessons and are eager to learn and determined to improve their skills. They listen quietly and attentively to instructions, work hard and with concentration, respect each other in their movements and work well both individually, in pairs and in groups. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the support they receive and benefit from the good provision.
138. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a good scheme of work, which ensures continuity and progression to provide and develop skills and continue to raise standards. The spacious playground and grassed area opposite the school is used sensibly for all activities. The hall is equipped with large and small apparatus, which is well maintained and easily available. There is a good range of resources, which support learning very well. Pupils are provided with a varied curriculum and consequently they have good skills in all aspects of physical education. Assessment procedures are in place but not used as yet to monitor performance and standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Standards in Religious Education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are developing satisfactory knowledge and understanding of festivals and places of worship of different religions. Achievement is satisfactory, which is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. The subject is widely promoted through assemblies and in personal and social development such as circle time. The school strongly emphasises the need for pupils to talk about things rather than regular recording and teachers encourage pupils to think and speak about themes such as caring, feelings, beginnings, special places, families and special occasions.
140. Year 1 and 2 pupils have written appropriately about the birth of Jesus. Year 1 pupils are beginning to understand the meaning of symbols in religion – 'The light means Jesus', and what a

church and a bible are. Pupils in Year 2 equate the story of the Lost Sheep with the need for caring and kindness and give examples of their own – ‘When I wake up my mum gives me breakfast and turns on the television’. Another pupil spoke about presents that her parents have given to her, showing their care and kindness. Assembly stories such as the Good Samaritan promote pupils understanding of themes such as care and thoughtfulness.

141. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Sometimes it is good. Teachers continually promote discussion often with the use of resources such as the ‘thinking candle’ or with pictures. Teachers arrange interesting visits to the local church, practical experiences such as a celebration of Chinese New Year, and talks from visitors for example about ‘Passover’ and the religious artefacts found in a synagogue. Other than the Christmas story, there is little evidence of recording work in religious education through writing.
142. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator, recently appointed, is leading the subject well, and actively promotes the shared school ethos of using religious education for the personal development of pupils, especially through assemblies and personal, social and health education. The locally agreed syllabus, which has recently been revised, helps to take learning forward, and will offer more guidelines on reflection. There is now a scheme of work, based on the agreed syllabus, a policy and useful assessment procedures, all of which are an improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the school, although this is planned for next year. Religious education in the school makes a very good contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.