

INSPECTION REPORT

FOULSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foulsham - Dereham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120807

Headteacher: Mr R Chamberlain

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven
3961

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th June 2003

Inspection number: 248178

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Foulsham Dereham Norfolk
Postcode:	NR20 5RT
Telephone number:	01362 683389
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of authority representative:	Mr C Vogler
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3961	M Raven	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? Interpretation of the school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught?
14068	G Hoggard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18814	G Crowther	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Foundation Stage of Learning	How well is the school led and managed?
17752	K Sheraton	Team inspector	English, Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Foulsham Primary School serves 98 boys and girls aged from four to eleven years, who come from the village of Foulsham itself and from a number of other smaller villages in the area. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes by the headteacher and five other teachers, two of whom are part-time.

Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds, there being very few families of other ethnic origins in the area. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Just over one in five pupils has special educational needs, which is about average for primary schools. A higher than average proportion of pupils has Statements of special educational needs. Pupils' special educational needs cover a wide range of learning, physical and sensory difficulties. The school serves a socially mixed community, where there are few extremes of advantage or disadvantage. Children start school at the age of four with levels of development which can vary considerably from year to year because of the small numbers involved. However, attainment on entry is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is providing a sound education. Most pupils achieve reasonably well and by the time they leave at the age of 11, standards in most subjects meet national expectations. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and the governing body and other staff with management responsibilities play their part soundly. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get off to a very good start in their first two years in school.
- The headteacher gives good leadership.
- The school successfully promotes great enthusiasm for learning and good behaviour and attitudes.
- The school is a close and caring community which looks after its pupils well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs, particularly those who have Statements of special needs, are very well supported and enabled to play a full part in all activities.
- The school has established a good partnership with parents, who think highly of the work it does.

What could be improved

- Standards in religious education.
- Procedures for checking on pupils' progress.
- The use of information about attainment and progress to plan work which challenges the most able, especially in mathematics.
- Opportunities for pupils to be independent and take responsibility, including more responsibility for their own learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. It has made satisfactory progress since then, despite a period of change and instability in leadership and management. The school recently received a government Achievement Award for improvement in standards over the period 1999 – 2002. A number of strengths noted at the last inspection have been maintained, including the good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. There has not been enough progress on some areas for improvement identified in 1997. In particular, the learning needs of the most able pupils are still not met as well as they could be.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	B	B
mathematics	E	D	C	C
science	D	E	A	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In small schools such as this, standards often fluctuate a lot from year to year, with the varying characteristics of the small numbers of pupils admitted each year. For instance, the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in Year 6 this year means that standards are not as high as they were last year. The school sets targets for pupils' performance in English and mathematics which are appropriate. Pupils achieve satisfactorily on the whole and over the past five years the trend in standards in English, mathematics and science has been generally in line with the nationally improving trend. Standards are currently average in most subjects about which a judgement can be made, including English, science and information and communication technology (ICT). However, they are below average in mathematics and in religious education they do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Most of the children currently in reception are likely to exceed expectations in all the areas of learning, including personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, by the end of their first year in school. By the end of Year 2, standards in most subjects about which a judgement can be made meet national expectations. Here too, the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are not met.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and take part with interest in all that is on offer, including the wide range of activities outside lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave sensibly in class and try hard. There is little bullying or other inappropriate behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Pupils work and play together very harmoniously. However, their personal development is limited as they have too few opportunities for independence and personal responsibility.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school and do so punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception and Year 1	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers are taught outstandingly well in the first class, so that the children get off to a very good start in acquiring literacy and numeracy. These are then built on soundly as pupils progress through Years 2 – 6. Throughout the school, pupils are managed well. Good order is maintained, so that pupils are able to get on and learn. Although a careful check is kept on the children's progress in reception, beyond that the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is unsatisfactory. The marking of pupils' work could be improved, in order to give them more advice about what they do well and what they need to work on. While the learning needs of pupils who have special educational needs are met very well, the needs of the most able are not met well enough, so that they do not achieve as much as they might.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. There are particular strengths in the curriculum for the youngest children, where all the required areas of learning are covered very imaginatively. The school offers a wide range of activities outside lessons, including sport. In Years 1 – 6 religious education is not taught as required in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are helped to have full and equal access to all learning and other activities on offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' moral development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. The procedures for checking on pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory. Not enough use is made of

	assessment information to plan work which matches pupils' learning needs.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher leads the school well, with a clear sense of direction. However, the management of improvement is not as effective as it might be. Other staff with management responsibilities play their part generally satisfactorily.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Most governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be improved. Their involvement in drawing up plans for school development requires improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school takes appropriate steps to compare its performance in national tests with that of other schools, both nationally and locally. However, the evaluation of pupils' achievements could be more focused and purposeful.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its money wisely to support school improvement, for example in extending and enhancing the accommodation to provide more teaching and learning space. The headteacher ensures that the principles of best value are applied appropriately to the work of the school.

The school is well staffed. Learning resources are satisfactory. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have to work in too small a space, which restricts some aspects of their learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress at school. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. • Teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's working partnership with parents. • The information which they receive about their children's progress. • The amount of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees that the school is well led by the headteacher. It also agrees that the school is very approachable if parents wish to discuss their children. The inspection does not, however, fully support the other views expressed by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standards reached in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 have been on a rising trend, similar to that seen nationally, since the last inspection. In recognition of the improvement in standards over the period 1999 – 2002, the school recently received an Achievement Award. Set against a background of change and uncertainty over the leadership and management of the school until just under three years ago, this is a good achievement. It is also to the school's credit that it has maintained a generally upward trend in standards, despite the fact that such small groups of pupils can cause considerable year on year fluctuations. For instance, where there are only eleven pupils in Year 6, as there are this year, then each pupil's points score in national tests counts for almost ten percentage points of the school's total. Clearly, it only takes two or three pupils with learning difficulties to seriously depress the school's total points score, leading to low grades when the school's performance is compared with that of all schools nationally. This may mask the fact that most pupils are in fact reaching expected standards. This is the situation in which the school finds itself this year. Although those pupils who have special educational needs are well taught, so that they achieve well in relation to their starting point and make good progress, they generally do not reach expected standards in most subjects by the time they leave. They are mostly working about two years behind expectations, around where an average Year 4 pupil might be. They read, for example, with less understanding than most 11 year olds, appreciating what they read at only a superficial level. In mathematics, they have only a limited understanding of ideas such as area and perimeter.
2. Standards overall are not as high as they might be because the most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should in Years 2 – 6. This is most clearly the case in mathematics, where in national tests few pupils reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum. The inspection finds significant under achievement by the most able pupils also in English and science. Although the school has made some attempt to identify those pupils who are gifted and talented, the programme which was put in place last year to try to meet some of their learning needs was not thought by the school to be satisfactory and so it was discontinued. As a consequence, these pupils are not fulfilling their potential.
3. Standards in the other subjects about which a judgement can be made, have mostly been maintained at a level similar to that seen at the last inspection, so that they generally meet national expectations by the time pupils go on to high school. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards in physical education or music, for lack of evidence. With the focus nationally on raising standards in literacy and numeracy over the period since the last inspection, this represents a reasonable achievement.
4. The situation by the end of Year 2 is similar to that found at the end of Year 6. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics tests have risen one year and fallen the next with variations in the characteristics of different small groups of pupils. However, so far as an overall trend can be discerned, it has been in the right direction. This is most clearly the case in mathematics. The inspection shows that standards at present are generally average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, as they were at the time of the last inspection. They are also average in most of the other subjects about which a judgement can be made.

5. In religious education standards are below average and do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus both at the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. This is because the school does not follow the agreed syllabus, even though this is a statutory requirement. Standards are not helped by the generally low profile that the subject has. The inadequacy of learning resources and the failure to make use of visits and visitors to bring the subject alive are other significant factors holding down standards. The effects are clear. By the end of Year 6, pupils have some fairly basic knowledge of Christianity. They are familiar with some well-known Bible stories, for example about the Feeding of the Five Thousand and Moses and the Ten Commandments. However, their knowledge of other faiths is very limited. The most significant shortcoming is that pupils lack the understanding of religion which is expected and usually found by the end of Year 6. They have no real understanding of how and why religion can be important in people's lives, or how it affects how many people live. They are unable to identify meaningful differences and similarities between different faiths, in the way that most pupils can by the age of eleven.
6. The fluctuations in standards seen at the end of Years 2 and 6 are seen also at the end of the reception year. The fact that most children are likely to exceed expectations in all the areas of learning this year is partly because this group is particularly able and many started school better equipped and more ready to learn than is usually the case. The very good teaching which they receive also makes an important contribution to their good achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils are very keen to come in to school on time, meet their friends and generally take part in their lessons and the various extra-curricular activities with enthusiasm. The youngest children in particular show tremendous enthusiasm for learning because they are constantly stimulated by a great variety of interesting displays and objects. For example, when learning about the seaside 'then and now' they were fascinated to see examples of old swimming costumes modelled by some of their classmates.
8. Behaviour is generally good in lessons, around the school and at breaks and lunchtimes. When pupils are tired or uninterested they sometimes become restless but never disruptive. Pupils play happily together, forging good relationships and involving everyone, including those with various disabilities, in their games. The few pupils from minority ethnic group backgrounds are fully integrated and get on well with others. Pupils report some very minor harassment, but indicate that these are quickly sorted out by staff. When moving around the school, pupils hold doors open for each other and respond politely to staff and visitors. School and personal property is safe.
9. Personal development is more mixed. Although relationships in the school are very good at all levels, there are few opportunities for pupils to take the initiative or to learn independently. Where responsibility is offered, pupils are happy to seize it. Some do minor classroom jobs, such as looking after plants or taking the register, and older children run the video library each week. However, there are few chances for older pupils to undertake research in the library or use computers independently and there is a degree of 'spoon-feeding' information in Years 5 and 6.
10. Attendance is good and the figures for unauthorised absence are also better than average. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. In about four lessons in ten the quality of teaching seen was good or better, with a small proportion being very good. In the rest, teaching was mainly satisfactory. A very small proportion of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The analysis of pupils' work completed over the course of the year and teacher's records, confirm that this is a fair reflection of the quality of teaching which pupils usually experience. It means that, overall, pupils learn at a satisfactory rate and generally achieve appropriately in line with their capabilities and their starting point.
12. There are particular strengths in the mixed age reception and Year 1 class, where all the children are taught during their first year in school and where the youngest pupils remain for a second year. The teaching here is very good and it promotes very good learning, so that the children achieve well in all the areas of learning. It is characterised by a liveliness, good humour and enthusiasm which soon rubs off on the children, so that they enjoy coming to school and want to learn. The classroom is very attractively laid out with many exciting displays. For example, in connection with work on the seaside there is a lively display of paraphernalia, such as swimming costumes and buckets and spades from another era, borrowed from the museum. There is also a very carefully arranged display of natural materials from the seashore, such as driftwood and seaweed. Such lively and stimulating displays successfully encourage the children's curiosity and enthusiasm. They soon want to explore the items on show and enjoy finding out more.
13. The teaching emphasises the development of the most important skills. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well. The children are firmly but gently managed. Staff make clear to them what sort of behaviour is expected and what is not. For example, the children are consistently discouraged from calling out, it being carefully explained to them that all need to be able to listen and hear what is being said. The children are encouraged to develop self confidence, for example through some good opportunities to share with the whole class their thoughts and feelings about what they have been doing and learning.
14. The teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers is excellent. This ensures that the children get off to a flying start in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills. For example, the teaching of the sounds that letters make is very clear and imaginative. The children love naming the miniature dolls called *a*, *e*, *i*, *o* and *u*. The very good use of lively, funny skipping rhymes successfully stimulates the children to write their own rhymes.
15. The good relationships and class control which are characteristic of the reception class are also found in all the other classes. Teachers maintain good discipline, so that pupils are able to concentrate on their work, and get on and learn. They make it quite clear to pupils that there are times when it is appropriate to speak and other times when it is not.
16. A weakness is that teachers do not always spell out for pupils at the start of lessons what it is they are going to do and learn. There is good practice in some classes, but also some which is unsatisfactory. In a science lesson in the Year 5/6 class, the teacher clearly displayed the learning intentions for the lesson on the board. She went on to explain these carefully, relating this lesson back to what had been learned in the previous lesson, spelling out very clearly what pupils were expected to achieve. This was very helpful, as it gave pupils a clear understanding of their own learning. However, in a mathematics lesson in the Year 3/4 class, the teacher failed to make clear to pupils at the outset what the lesson was about and what it was they would do and learn.

17. The good support which they receive means that pupils who have special educational needs, including those who have Statements of special needs, make good progress in their learning and achieve well whatever their starting point. Those who have physical difficulties are very well supported, so that they are able to take a full part in lessons. Those who find learning more difficult are enabled to participate fully in lessons and make good progress. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively, often working alongside individuals or small groups, explaining the work, guiding pupils' response and encouraging focus, concentration and effort.
18. The needs of the most capable are not met well enough, so that they do not achieve as much as they could. This was the case at the time of the last inspection and it has not improved. The inspection shows that this is because such pupils are not given work which challenges them to make the most of their abilities. Too often, all pupils do the same exercises. The work set is usually appropriately matched to the learning needs of the majority of pupils, and those who find learning more difficult are helped to cope and succeed. However, it does not encourage the most able to reach the higher levels of knowledge and understanding of which they are capable. These pupils have too few opportunities to learn independently, to engage in research and find things out for themselves. For example, in a Year 6 geography lesson, the most able completed a highly structured work sheet, answering set questions which gave them little opportunity for individual research or for an imaginative, creative and extended written response. This is characteristic of much of the work in Years 5 and 6. The school has too little useful information about pupils' attainment and progress at the moment and this makes it more difficult to match work to pupils' learning needs.
19. Marking is weak. It gives pupils too little feedback on what they do well and what needs to be improved. It consists mainly of simple ticks. Teachers do not engage in much written dialogue with pupils about their work, as might be expected for most pupils beyond Year 2.

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

20. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and enriches pupils' experience by teaching French in the juniors. However, the statutory requirement to teach religious education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus is not met. Provision for pupils' personal, social, and health education is satisfactory overall. The school provides appropriate sex education. It is aware of the need to develop further its work on the mis-use of drugs. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good and rich, because very effective links are made between six different areas of learning.
21. The school offers too few opportunities for pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning and to develop independence in their work. In Years 5 and 6 in particular, work is often too closely structured for all but the least able, and restricts their opportunities to learn independently and achieve more.
22. A key issue for improvement of the previous inspection was to put in place schemes of work for history, geography and design and technology. This has been addressed because the school now bases its planning on national guidance. These subjects are appropriately planned over a two-year cycle which ensures there is adequate coverage of the curriculum and overcomes the potential difficulty of having mixed age classes. National guidance on the teaching of literacy and numeracy has also appropriately been adopted since the last inspection. Various booster and catch up classes are used helpfully to support pupils who need extra work to come up to standard in English and mathematics.

23. ICT is used reasonably well to support pupils' learning in the other subjects. For example, pupils use the Internet for research in science in Years 5 and 6 and they use the computer in their art lessons in Years 1 and 2.

24. Pupils with special educational needs experience the full curriculum and they join in all of the activities which take place in their classes. Particular care is taken in managing any special requirements such as the use of special equipment or withdrawal from lessons for physical exercises so that pupils do not miss parts of the curriculum. A key issue from the last inspection was to improve the rate of progress made by the most able. This has not been achieved because teachers do not modify what they teach sufficiently to provide appropriate levels of challenge.
25. The school makes good provision for activities outside lessons. For example, older pupils learn to play the guitar and the recorder and play cricket, netball and football. There is also a popular Latin club. Pupils are eager to take part in these clubs and apply themselves well during the sessions. The curriculum is also enhanced by educational visits and the contribution that visitors bring to the school. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit a Saxon village to help them understand life in the past and they visit a coastal town to explore differences with their own locality. The village is well used to extend pupils' learning. Pupils carry out surveys, visit the local Church and sketch buildings. There are good sporting links with schools in the local area and some participation in county events. Visitors to the school have included local clergy, a puppet theatre, African drummers, a music ensemble, a health professional and a road safety officer. These visitors have captivated the pupils' interest and enhanced what the school offers.
26. The school has established good links with the local secondary school which shares some of its particular expertise in technology. This has led to exciting projects in design and technology and ICT in Years 5 and 6 which have motivated the pupils and extended their learning. There are also good links with the local pre-school, which is visited by the headteacher, reception teacher and youngest children. The pre-school children also visit the school, for example to watch and participate in the school sports' day. This involvement helps the children settle into school quickly. The school has not participated in training student teachers in recent years but has supported students from the local college who wish to gain experience of working with children.
27. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, with some strengths.
28. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. There are a number of appropriate opportunities for pupils to understand feelings and emotions and the way they affect people and make them behave. For example, there was a very good whole school assembly on sharing the *Three Ss* (silence, stress and smiles). There are some suitable opportunities in lessons for pupils to appreciate beauty in made and natural objects, for example as they discover the spiral patterns in seashells. However, these are spontaneous and infrequent occurrences. Too few opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development are planned into the curriculum. Where this does occur, such as in the Reception and Year 1 class, it illuminates the children's learning and generates very positive attitudes. For example, these pupils became fascinated by sculptures made of natural, outdoor materials after learning about the artists Andy Goldsworthy. They showed tremendous enthusiasm in collecting and using plants, wood and stones for their own sculptures. Too much teacher direction of pupils' learning in Years 5 and 6 deprives pupils of the space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
29. The provision for moral development is good and it is reinforced throughout the school. This is a warm, caring community where each pupil is known and valued, and staff consistently provide very good role models through the very good relationships evident at all levels. Assembly

themes, such as keeping safe on holidays, making the most of our day, and various Biblical parables, help to explain and illuminate moral principles. All pupils understand and conform to the high standards of behaviour expected of them and parents value highly this sense of community. It is particularly evident in the youngest class, where pupils quickly learn expected behaviour and are encouraged to think carefully about why something is not right or desirable.

30. The provision for social development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively together in pairs and groups in classes. In Years 3 and 4 in particular, pupils learn a valuable lesson about consideration and sharing as they struggle to work in too confined a space. Pupils are successfully encouraged to respect and include fully those who have special educational needs or other difficulties. Good relationships between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are successfully fostered. However, there are omissions in the development of independence and self-reliance, especially for older pupils who are given few opportunities to find things out for themselves. Independent learning occurs more consistently with the youngest children, who are given lots of opportunities to learn by themselves and respond with great gusto.
31. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn in some depth about their immediate area of Norfolk, contrasting, for example, life at the seaside now and in the past, and considering how the villages of Foulsham and Wells next the Sea are similar and different. They make visits to local churches and Bury St Edmunds cathedral, and learn about Christian festivals and special objects. A variety of music is played in assemblies, such as reggae and Gregorian chant, and there have been workshops on Indian dance and African drumming. However, in general, these opportunities are not planned systematically in lessons, and in the case of religious education, there are lamentable gaps in pupils' knowledge of other faiths and religions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. This is a warm and caring school, where there are good relationships and an appreciation of each person's value to the community, which is very much valued by parents. Particularly good care is provided for those pupils who have physical disabilities. There are good arrangements for child protection, including protecting pupils from access to unsuitable material on the Internet or by email. The headteacher is the designated officer and has had recent retraining. Staff work closely together and have also had training on the issue, including support staff. Day-to-day routines are efficient and well organised to ensure health and safety is well managed but unobtrusive.
33. The monitoring of attendance is good. Registrations are taken swiftly and efficiently. In the case of absence, parents are contacted by letter or telephone and most are supportive in explaining absences and in communication with the school. Few parents take holidays in term time.
34. The promotion of good behaviour is unobtrusive but uniform across all staff, with a corresponding degree of consistency in practice. Pupils understand well what is required and largely apply the rules. There is a series of appropriate rewards for good behaviour - including those given out by mid-day supervisors - culminating in a celebration assembly each Friday, when pupils are given praise and certificates. Pupils are quite clear about the standards of behaviour required and, although they mentioned some minor cases of friction and harassment, they are equally confident that these will be quickly sorted out by staff.

35. In such a close community, it is appropriate that much of the monitoring of personal development takes place informally. There is a stable staff group which knows well all the pupils in its care.
36. Although the school has made some progress in putting assessment systems in place since the last inspection, the procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance remain unsatisfactory overall. Samples of pupils' work in teachers' assessment files are sometimes of very limited use. Some are not dated, so that progress over time is unclear. There are few comments on progress, except where a commercial recording system is used in science. In some classes the only indication of progress in reading and writing appears in annual assessments. Information about pupils' attainment and progress is not reviewed frequently enough. At the time of the inspection, in some subjects no records of attainment and progress had been completed for just under a year. This means that assessment systems do not identify early enough those pupils who are not making enough progress. Reading records do not show the skills that pupils have learned or identify what they need to do next to move on in their learning. The assessment information which is gathered is not used effectively to plan work which matches pupils' learning needs. The consequences are seen most clearly in the lack of challenge for and under-expectation of the most able.
37. Procedures for assessing children's attainment when they start school are very good. Staff know the children very well and are aware of the next steps in their learning. For instance, those children in reception who have highly developed writing skills have been clearly identified and work is being provided to enable them to develop their skill further.
38. Pupils in some classes have individual targets to reach but this practice is not established across the whole school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoy having writing targets to improve their stories but they do not know exactly what they need to do to achieve these targets or how long it should take. Progress towards the targets is reviewed infrequently and therefore does not lead to improvements in the pupils' learning.
39. The assessment and record keeping procedures for pupils with special educational needs are efficient and well managed. The records show that the school has a good understanding of these pupils and their particular needs. Appropriate individual education plans are in place and these specify the next steps in the pupils' learning and the actions that the school will take to help the pupils meet their targets. However, there is variation across classes in the precision of the targets and the detail about the agreed actions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school's partnership with parents is very good and something the school has worked hard at. Parents and carers are very supportive. Their views are extremely positive and most feel the school is well led and managed and behaviour is generally good and that the quality teaching is helping their children become mature and responsible. An overwhelming majority say their children like school and are making good progress. They singled out the Reception and Year 1 class for special praise. However, about a fifth of those who responded to the parents' questionnaires were unhappy about the provision of activities outside lessons. The inspection found that there was a good range of activities. The dissatisfaction felt by some parents may spring from the fact that these activities have, until now, been offered largely to older pupils, which is usual. A smaller number of parents felt the school did not work closely with them or keep them well informed. The inspection found that the school is tremendously open and willing to involve itself with parents and it communicates with them appropriately concerning pupils' progress.

41. Parents are very willing to support the school, although few are able to help in classrooms. They help with sports coaching, assist on trips and visits and actively contribute through the Friends of Foulsham School Association to run fundraising events such as the Christmas fair. Regular events, such as drama performances and family assemblies, are very well supported, and many parents come in on Friday mornings to look at their children's work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. During the past three years, following a period when the school had rapid changes of headteacher, leadership has been good. The current headteacher has provided much-needed stability of leadership and has established a clear, shared vision for what the school should be trying to achieve. The school's aims, agreed by staff and governors, are reflected in its work. The headteacher has successfully motivated the staff team to seek improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, and he has had their full support. As a result of a strong focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, results of national assessments at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily, which has been recognised by an Achievement Award. Good leadership has also ensured that pupils' attitudes to learning, their enthusiasm for school, and their behaviour are equally as good as at the last inspection. The headteacher has been well supported by experienced senior staff, who have also led important initiatives to raise standards.
43. The management of the school is satisfactory. On a day-to-day basis, the school is a well-ordered and happy place for learning, with very good relationships between pupils and with staff. Teachers, teaching assistants and other staff work well together as a team and they know what is expected of them. A number of appropriate initiatives aimed at raising standards have been started, but have not been seen through. For example, lack of challenge in the work provided for the most able pupils was a weakness at the last inspection. Although the school has made attempts to deal with this issue, it is still a weakness. Improvements in procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have not been built upon sufficiently to ensure that teachers use the information effectively to match work to pupils' needs.
44. Arrangements for the performance management of teachers are well established and lead to useful, individual targets for improvement. At a classroom level, however, more could be done to help teachers identify strengths and weaknesses in their work so that they can improve the quality of pupils' learning. In short, management has introduced better policies and systems, which have improved the work of the school, but has not checked the impact on pupils' achievements carefully enough.
45. Overall, subject co-ordinators play a satisfactory part in leading and managing improvements, but their current influence varies considerably. For example, the science co-ordinator has led a significant development to raise standards in the experimental and investigative aspects of pupils' work, but the mathematics co-ordinator has recently returned to school following an extended absence and is out of touch with current developments. Teachers co-ordinate two or maybe more aspects of the school's work, which increases the difficulty of their task. At the last inspection, co-ordinators were not effective enough because they did not have an overview of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Whilst there has been improvement for some co-ordinators and subjects, this is still an area for development.
46. The school takes satisfactory steps to monitor and evaluate its work. For example, staff and governors analyse the results of national tests, identify strengths and weaknesses in attainment, and take action. In mathematics, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have covered more work in data handling this year because it was a weaker aspect of performance last year. Where the quality of teaching and learning in lessons has been evaluated in a focused way, such as when the

headteacher looked at how well teachers use the session at the end of a lesson to consolidate learning, this has been effective. Generally, however, evaluation of pupils' achievements, both in lessons and by looking at their work, is not purposeful or systematic enough. In particular, this creates weaknesses in the school's ability to decide whether measures to raise standards have been successful. The school self review, carried out in partnership with the local education authority adviser, is a useful document to help the school take stock of what it does well and what needs to be improved.

47. The governing body plays a satisfactory part in the leadership of the school and there are a number of strong features in its work. Some governors have considerable experience and lead their committees effectively, such as those with an overview of curriculum developments and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Other governors are relatively new and still learning their role. The governing body does not fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that the curriculum includes religious education taught according to the locally agreed syllabus. There are also a few minor omissions from the documentation which governors are required to provide for parents. Most governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development, but some are more aware than others about the importance of evaluating pupils' achievements. Whilst governors are very supportive, they also ask questions to find out if the school is doing as well as it should. Given these strengths, governors do not play a full enough part in devising the school development plan, which is largely put together by the headteacher and staff. They do, however, monitor progress on each aspect of the plan closely. Over the past few years, they have also pursued a number of initiatives of their own to improve provision, for example by setting and monitoring the headteacher's performance targets. Although some of the school's monitoring and evaluation of its work draws on the principles of best value, the governors' understanding of the need to compare, consult, challenge and compete, in order to raise the quality of the school's work, needs improvement.
48. The school uses its resources well to provide the best possible provision to support pupils' learning. For example, funding has been used to attract and retain key staff and is being used to improve the accommodation. Priorities in the school development are supported by appropriate funding, such as the 'booster' classes for some older pupils aimed at raising attainment in mathematics. Financial management is good, with the governing body playing an important part in deciding the budget and monitoring spending. The current, very small contingency is the result of good planning, because the school knows that additional funding will soon be forthcoming. Funding provided for specific purposes is used effectively. The best example of this is the good support provided for pupils with special educational needs, which is a significant factor in the good progress they make.
49. The school is well staffed, with a committed team of teachers and classroom assistants. The quality of the accommodation is currently unsatisfactory. Although the grounds provide good facilities for play and learning, the Year 3 and 4 classroom is very cramped, which restricts work in practical subjects, as was seen for example in a science lesson. The 'temporary' classroom for Years 5 and 6 suffers temperature extremes, which can create uncomfortable working conditions. Learning resources are adequate in almost all subjects but unsatisfactory in religious education.
50. Following a period of instability, the leadership and management of the school have improved satisfactorily since the last inspection, but a number of weaknesses remain. Bearing in mind the current achievements of the pupils and the quality of provision, the school provides satisfactory value for the funding it receives.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In order to address the issues raised in this report, the headteacher, governors and staff, in conjunction with the local education authority should:
- (1) Raise standards in religious education by:
 - Ensuring that the locally agreed syllabus is followed.
 - Improving teachers' subject knowledge.
 - Improving learning resources. (*Paragraphs 5, 110 – 112*)
 - (2) Improve procedures for checking on pupils' progress by:
 - Putting in place clear systems for the regular assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects.
 - Ensuring that there is regular monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and of pupils' work. (*Paragraphs 36 – 39, 46, 72, 79, 85, 106*)
 - (3) Ensure that the information gathered is used to plan work, especially in mathematics, which meets the learning needs of all pupils, particularly the most able and those who are gifted or talented. (*Paragraph 36*)
 - (4) Provide more opportunities for pupils to be independent and take responsibility. This should include taking more responsibility for some aspects of their own learning, for example by making more use of Internet and library-based research and investigation. (*Paragraphs 9, 18*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	7	11	1	0	0
Percentage	0	10	33	52	5	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 four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	98
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (79)	94 (93)	94 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (93)	94 (93)	94 (79)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Pupils' achievement by gender has been omitted from these tables because of the small numbers of pupils involved.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	7	5	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (80)	83 (70)	100 (70)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (50)	100 (60)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. **Pupils' achievement by gender has been omitted from these tables because of the small numbers of pupils involved.***

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	80	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	24.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
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	£
Total income	261,929
Total expenditure	278,657
Expenditure per pupil	2,843
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,440
Balance carried forward to next year	5,712

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	98
Number of questionnaires returned	63

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	43	6	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	48	0	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	54	13	0	2
The teaching is good.	60	37	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	41	11	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	37	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	44	40	10	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	62	35	2	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	46	6	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	42	18	3	3

Numbers may not sum to 100 because numbers have been rounded.

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

52. Children have a very good start to school in the reception class, as was reported at the last inspection. A very interesting, rich and relevant curriculum helps the children to learn a good range of knowledge and skills, so they achieve well in all areas of learning. The children are confident, interested and clearly enjoy being at school. Fifteen reception children are taught alongside seven younger Year 1 pupils, and all benefit from the very good quality of education. The older reception children have been in the class since last September, whilst the younger ones joined the class in January. Good procedures ensure a smooth start to school, and staff quickly assess children's attainment, so that they can plan to meet children's learning needs, including those who have special educational needs.
53. The quality of teaching is very good in all areas of learning and the adults work very well as a team. Work is planned meticulously, often with particular tasks or support for individual children. A minor weakness is that adults do not always ensure that children start promptly on their independent tasks. A clear understanding of what each child already knows and what they need to learn next underpins very good teaching of basic skills. Relationships between adults and children are very good, with lots of praise and encouragement that builds children's confidence.
54. The Foundation Stage curriculum recommended for this age group is implemented very effectively and imaginatively. Each activity has a central purpose, but staff exploit opportunities to develop a wide range of abilities, such as encouraging children to explain what they are doing, thus developing communication skills. About half of the children are already exceeding the standard expected when they join Year 1 (the Early Learning Goals) and almost all the children will reach the standard by the end of the reception year. This is a more able year group than is usual for the school.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Whatever children's starting points, the very positive approach of the staff and interesting activities help them to become confident and motivated learners. For example, the children were really excited when the teacher showed them different types of seaweed, but they listened quietly to her explanation, asked sensible questions, and made perceptive observations about the shape of the seaweed and how it felt. Adults involve the children fully in all activities, which keeps them well motivated and keen to learn. Independence is fostered by giving the children responsibility, such as when one child set up the tape recorder for others to listen to a poem. Before tackling self-chosen activities, children record what they intend to do on a chart, which also helps the adults to check the range of work each child attempts. In this way, classroom routines encourage independence so that, in all the sessions observed, children were seen organising their own materials and solving their own problems. Children work well in pairs and groups, such as when two girls made, "The biggest sandcastle we can", sharing the equipment and the work. Children understand the rules of the classroom. For example, when it is time to tidy up they know that everyone must help. The children's very good self-help skills were illustrated well when a group played on the 'beach', getting in and out of swimming costumes several times.

Communication, language and literacy

56. The children are good communicators and, as part of all activities, their ability to listen carefully, express their views and ask questions is encouraged and valued. For example, the class looked at some beach wear and had to decide which were old and which were new. They listened carefully to the teacher's questions and made very valuable points about what they thought and why. Children making flags in the design and technology area talked to each other helpfully about what they were making, whilst constant conversation on the 'beach' supported children's creative activity. Basic skills of reading and writing are taught very well. The older, more able children wrote five or six line poems about the sea, and later read them out. Even the less able children have a good grasp of how to write, copying text or writing a few words independently. Almost all the children are already reading simple text confidently, many at a level well above that expected for their age, and all the children have a good early knowledge of letter sounds.

Mathematical development

57. Children make good progress in this area. Numeracy sessions are supplemented well by a wide range of counting, ordering and pattern-making activities around the classroom. Almost all of the children count to 20, and many count well beyond. They also count on from a given number, say from six to 13. Almost all count a set of objects to 10 reliably, as was seen when they were counting pebbles and shells, and they can carry out simple addition and subtraction with these small groups. The work the more able children had done making patterns, was particularly impressive because they had gone well beyond simple sequences to invent more complex patterns of shells and pebbles. All but a few of the children know and draw simple plane shapes and they talk accurately about sides and corners. It was particularly noticeable that, as part of many activities, the staff are very skilful in encouraging the children to count, measure and look for patterns so that mathematical development is enhanced.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. Imaginative planning of the curriculum helps children to make good progress in this area of their learning. Current work based on the theme 'The seaside' has led to many opportunities for finding out. A visit to the Norfolk coast really stimulated the children's interest and, since then, they have been involved in a wide range of activities. In science, they have learnt about plants and animals that live at the seaside, and compared them with those that do not. Resources from Cromer Museum have been used very well to learn about what it was like at the seaside in the past. The children have found out about the Caribbean and they know the similarities and differences between there and Norfolk. All these topics have been skilfully used to pursue work in other areas of learning, such as the children's art work, which is an integral part of the stimulating displays that enrich the classroom. The children's puppets show good early skills in design and technology, and all are able to use the computer for simple word processing and picture making.

Creative development

59. Children develop their creative skills well through a wide range of activities. In art, the recent focus has been on sculpture. Photographs show the impressive sculptures children made whilst visiting the beach, and there are attractive mobiles made from natural materials. Pencil drawings of Blakeney church are of high quality for this age, and collage, painting and printing all show good development of skills. Little music making was seen, but the children sing simple songs and rhymes enthusiastically and use the drums in the music area to explore rhythms. The 'beach' prompted some outstanding creative play. Sailing to an island, swimming, sunbathing, surfing,

and fishing were all popular activities, with lots of talk and co-operation. "I'm going surfing," said one child. "I'll give you big waves," said another. "Don't make them too big!"

Physical development

60. No physical education sessions were observed, but watching the children at play indicated that their physical skills are developing well. The lack of an integral outdoor play area, where children can have physical activity of choice, is a weakness, but staff make good use of the playground, adventure play equipment and the hall for physical sessions. Activities in the classroom develop the children's control of finer movements, such as writing with pencils, making flags in the design and technology area, or making models with construction equipment.

ENGLISH

61. Results of the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2 were in line with the national average in reading and well above the national average in writing. The results for pupils in Year 6 were above the national average. The picture is the same when results are compared with those of similar schools. Overall the girls did better than the boys. There have been considerable variations in test results over the past few years as a result of differences in the small groups of pupils on roll. Small numbers also account for gender differences in performance from year to year, as the proportions of boys and girls vary.
62. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are now around the nationally expected levels. Year 6 has a number of pupils who are attaining above national expectations but there are also a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, who do not reach expected levels for their age. In relation to their starting point, pupils' achievements in both the infants and juniors are generally satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational is good because of the targeted support received by many of these pupils in lessons.
63. Standards in speaking and listening are about average. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen well to adults, in groups of different sizes. For example, they responded successfully to instructions to create a complex spiral pattern. Pupils generally speak clearly but responses are often not developed beyond short statements. They respond to teacher led discussions but make few spontaneous comments and ask few questions in whole class sessions.
64. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils express a clear point of view and give appropriate reasons. When they are given opportunities to discuss and respond to the ideas being taught there are noticeable improvements in the quality of their responses and their level of involvement. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the pupils discussed in pairs some of the different points of view of characters in *The Midnight Fox* and then made well thought out contributions to the whole class discussion. However, such activities do not take place on a regular enough basis throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs contribute appropriately to the discussions when given specific support by an adult.
65. Standards in reading are average. In Year 2, pupils make good use of a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. They have a secure grasp of letter sounds and make sensible attempts at unknown words. Most pupils know that they should re-read phrases if they do not make sense initially. The most capable pupils read with expression and tackle words beyond the levels expected for their age. For example, in Year 1, a pupil was able to read *mystery* and *favourite* and in Year 2, a pupil read *whispered* and *disappeared* with confidence. Pupils are aware of the difference between fiction and non-fiction and have basic skills in using the index and contents page in reference books.

66. In Year 6, the majority of pupils read fluently and with intonation. They retell stories they have read and show a good understanding of plot and characters. The most able pupils show great enjoyment of books. They discuss their favourite authors and give reasons for the choices they make in their reading books. However, some of the less able pupils do not show similar enthusiasm because their current reading books are too demanding. Most pupils are confident in using non-fiction books and use appropriate strategies to find the information they need.
67. Standards in writing are average. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have neat and legible handwriting, although they do not always use this when writing in other subjects. Many pupils write with imagination to create interest in their work, for example, they used descriptive words effectively when writing about a storm and describing fireworks. Pupils generally write in short sentences and use capital letters and full stops accurately. They are developing good spelling strategies which they apply to increasingly complex words.
68. By the end of Year 6, pupils generally write with a clear structure to their writing and awareness of the purpose and audience for the writing. For example, pupils write persuasively in their letters about a motorway being constructed through the village. They write for a range of purposes, for example, composing poems, writing myths and reports. Most pupils use punctuation such as speech marks, exclamation marks and apostrophes accurately.
69. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. National guidance is used effectively to plan work which means that the pupils experience broad coverage of the subject. Teachers are confident about teaching the subject and therefore give clear explanations and plan well-structured lessons. The pupils are given appropriate tasks which engage their interest and this is particularly effective when a piece of work is developed over a few days. For example, in Years 3 and 4 the pupils showed considerable enjoyment and worked hard when building on previous work to write stories for younger pupils. Lessons are generally well structured with good routines which mean that little time is wasted. However, work is not always matched to the time available and in one lesson no pupils completed the work set.
70. Pupils are usually all given the same exercises to complete. Pupils with special educational needs are usually able to tackle these tasks and make gains in their learning because they are well-supported by teaching assistants who manage the activity in small steps. However, the work set does not always provide sufficient challenge for the most capable pupils who need more demanding work to extend their learning. In addition, teachers often do not make effective use of questioning to challenge and develop the pupils' responses. Insufficient attention is given to checking how well pupils are reading and using this information to plan guided reading sessions which develop the pupils' learning.
71. The provision for pupils to apply and extend their literacy skills in other subjects is satisfactory in practice, but it is not systematically planned. There is some appropriate use of ICT within the subject, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use word processing programmes confidently to write stories and poems.
72. The subject leader shows commitment and enthusiasm in leading the initiatives in the school improvement plan to promote attainment in English. She has a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject across the school but the arrangements for monitoring the subject are variable. For example, she has effectively reviewed standards in speaking and listening across the school and is aware of weaknesses in this aspect but she has limited involvement in analysing the outcomes of tests to monitor whether pupils are making sufficient gains in their learning.

MATHEMATICS

73. Over the past three years, results in national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 have been close to the national average and about the same as those gained by similar schools. Results at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily. In 2000, they were well below the national average, but by 2002 they were close to the national average and matched those gained by similar schools. A focus on raising standards in the subject was successful and the school exceeded the target it had set itself for the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 4. Although care must be taken when making judgements based on the results of the small group of pupils in each age group, a significant feature is the relatively small proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the tests. For example, in 2002 the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 at the end of Year 2, or Level 5 at the end of Year 6, was well below the national average, and lower than in other subjects. This suggests that the most capable pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Whilst boys have performed much better than girls in the Year 6 tests, there is no evidence that this is due to weaknesses in teaching.
74. Inspection evidence showed that standards in Year 2 are close to national expectations. Almost all of these pupils work confidently with numbers to 100, ordering them, adding and subtracting, and knowing multiplication facts for 2, 5 and 10. For example, pupils used their knowledge of rounding to add 19 or 21 to two-digit numbers. A few less capable pupils work well with numbers to 20 but find larger numbers difficult. The most able solve fairly challenging problems mentally, such as when they were asked to select stamps of various values to make a given total, but their past work showed that they often complete the same tasks as the rest of the class. Work about measuring, identifying shapes and handling data is close to the standard expected for pupils' ages. When given the opportunity, such as in a good investigation of square numbers, pupils use and apply what they know and organise their work well. There is too little of this type of work to challenge all pupils, particularly the most able.
75. Standards in Year 6 are below national expectations, and lower than in 2002 because the year group contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In number work, the least able pupils are still building their understanding of value of digits, for example by multiplying and dividing numbers by 10. The majority of pupils have a good grasp of fractions, decimals and percentages, such as calculating 10 per cent of £2.40 and working out the sale price. Work on data handling shows that most pupils understand the median and mean of a set of data, and they can work out the probability of a spinner landing on certain numbers. Work finding the area of triangles, drawing angles accurately and rotational symmetry is at least of the standard expected for pupils' ages. As in Year 2, the most able largely complete the same work as other pupils, but their task in the lesson observed was challenging.
76. The standards attained by groups of pupils entering Year 1 vary considerably. Therefore, judgements about pupils' achievements (the progress they make over time) are more reliable when made on the basis of pupils' work, rather than comparing standards in the current Year 6 with those in Year 1. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory across the school, and best in number work. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 order numbers to 100. They extend their skills in Years 3 and 4 through calculations with numbers to 100, including multiplication and division, and further build upon them in Years 5 and 6 when they learn long multiplication and division. Pupils generally complete a good quantity of work. Less capable pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well because of the good support they are given by teachers and teaching assistants. Most of the other pupils achieve satisfactorily but often complete the same work, which does not challenge the most capable sufficiently. This is a similar finding to the last inspection.

77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, as it was at the last inspection. Basic skills are well taught and teachers explain new work clearly. For example, in a lesson for Years 3 and 4, the teacher's good demonstration of symmetry, using shapes on an overhead projector, helped the pupils to understand the idea and complete the subsequent work successfully. The mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of lessons move quickly, engage the pupils' interest and encourage them to try hard. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 counted in 2s, 5s and 10s and then the teacher posed the question, "How can I calculate 12×10 ?", which prompted the pupils to think of a number of methods of finding the answer. Although teachers plan lessons carefully, the work they set is not always challenging enough, particularly for the most able. This is clear from pupils' past work and was also seen in two lessons where the mental mathematics activities were too easy for some pupils, and they were asked to carry out written tasks which they were capable of doing mentally. Teachers are not always accurate enough in their assessments of what pupils already know and can do. Where teaching was very good, Year 1 pupils were really challenged by the high expectations of the teacher. What the teacher wanted the pupils to learn was made crystal clear, and they went on to explore patterns with sounds and objects. The pupils learned a lot because the teacher kept challenging them to make more complex patterns, asked them to explain what they had done, but was always there to provide support. A challenging task for the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 required them to find two decimals from a group, which would multiply to make target numbers. They had to think hard, but were excited when they worked out how to find the answers. An occasional weakness was that the pace of parts of lessons was too slow, or time was lost between activities because the teacher did not ensure that pupils started work quickly.
78. Good use is made of national guidance to provide a suitable curriculum, particularly in number work. Throughout the school, however, pupils are not given enough activities to use and develop their skills by investigating patterns in numbers and shapes. In Years 1 and 2, almost all tasks are completed on sheets, so pupils have too few opportunities to set out their work. Booster classes are used well to help a few pupils make better progress. Numeracy skills are used and developed in some work seen in other subjects, such as in science where pupils measure plant growth in Years 1 and 2 or draw graphs of temperature rise in Years 5 and 6. In other subjects, there is little indication that teachers plan to develop numeracy skills. Pupils' past work has very few instances where skills in ICT have been used and developed, though pupils were observed using computers to consolidate skills. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory at a whole-school level, with regular tests to check how pupils are doing. However, this information, and that which teachers gather on a day-to-day basis, is not used well enough to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' learning needs.
79. Management and leadership of the subject are currently unsatisfactory. The subject leader has recently returned from a long-term absence and, whilst it is clear that much valuable improvement work was done last year, she is now out of touch with strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. There has been little recent monitoring and evaluation of lessons or pupils' work. The mathematics initiative in the current school development plan, to boost the achievement of lower-attaining pupils, is appropriate, but little has been done to evaluate whether it has been successful. Now that leadership of the subject is more stable, the school is better placed to build on the national test results at the end of Year 6 and satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

80. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2 and also by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. They are not as high as they were in last year's national tests in Year 6, but they are similar to teachers' assessments of standards in Year 2. At both points,

standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Fluctuations in standards from one year to another are common where small numbers of pupils are concerned, as standards vary with the varying characteristics of the pupils and one pupil counts for a high proportion of the points scored in national tests. Boys did better than girls in the Year 6 tests last year, but there are no significant gender differences now. Most boys and girls achieve reasonably well, so that most pupils reach expected standards by the time they leave. However, too few pupils develop higher levels of knowledge, skill and understanding.

81. By the end of Year 6 most pupils know that materials exist in a number of different states and that those states can be changed. They know about the different states of water, for example, as a liquid, as a solid when it is frozen and as a gas when it is heated. Pupils carry out their own investigations. For example, they investigate the evaporation of water in different atmospheres, for instance in moving air, warm air and so on. The use of investigations has been improved this year and it makes a useful contribution to pupils' understanding, although there is room for further improvement. The opportunity to use some of their mathematical skills is also helpful. For example, pupils in Year 6 measure the rise in temperature of water as it is heated and record their observations in a graph. Pupils also make some appropriate use of ICT to help them learn, for example accessing information on food and a healthy diet from the Internet. Pupils know that light travels in a straight line from its source to the eye. They understand that light can pass through some materials but not others. Pupils are familiar with the terms *transparent*, *translucent* and *opaque*.
82. By the end of Year 2, most pupils know that plants need water to develop and grow. They know the main parts of a flowering plant, such as the *leaf*, *flower*, *stem* and *root*. They investigate and find out what happens when you heat solids such as chocolate. They know that some solids can become liquids when they are heated. As they grow their own plants, they use some of their mathematical skills, for example to measure the increasing height of their plant day by day.
83. The teaching of science is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in Years 3 and 4 and also some in Years 1 and 2. In Years 5 and 6, although the teaching is satisfactory, pupils have too few opportunities to research and learn independently. In a good Year 3 and 4 lesson on light, there were good opportunities for pupils to investigate how translucent, transparent and opaque objects form different shadows. The most able were given an appropriately challenging activity, which appropriately involved designing their own way of recording their observations. Other pupils recorded their findings with the help of a well designed recording plan.
84. In a Year 6 lesson on the components of a healthy diet, the teacher was very clear about what pupils were to do and what they should learn. She communicated this very effectively to the class, so that they had a good understanding of their learning. However, the work set was too limiting for many pupils, especially the most able. It did not allow them enough responsibility for directing their own learning, using research skills and recording their findings and ideas in their own way. The analysis of pupils' work shows that this is a common shortcoming of the work in science. Too little is done to challenge the most able.
85. The leadership and management of science require improvement. The subject co-ordinator has correctly identified the need to improve teachers' skills in the teaching of scientific investigation. He has provided helpful training on this and the beneficial effects are starting to be seen in the work that pupils do on this aspect. More training is planned. However, he has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning. Because of the weaknesses in challenge for the

most able, there is a need to develop this part of the role, so that teaching is systematically monitored, evaluated and developed where necessary.

ART AND DESIGN

86. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' ages. The last inspection judged attainment at the end of Year 6 to be above national expectations. Whilst this suggests a fall in standards, it must be borne in mind that the balance of the curriculum has changed since then, with greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy and less time given to subjects such as art and design. Pupils' current work shows use of a good range of techniques and materials, including drawing, painting, printing, collage and work in three dimensions. Pupils learn skills and explore different aspects of art, such as colour, pattern and texture.
87. In Years 1 and 2, the current topic is about sculpture. Drawing on the work of Andy Goldsworthy and examples from the natural world, the pupils explore spirals. They made human spirals, organising themselves by height or colour of clothing to create differing effects, and spirals by cutting paper. The pupils discussed their work, showing that they are building the vocabulary needed to describe art. Past work includes bold paintings to illustrate their stories about *Aslan the Lion*, clay faces attractively glazed, and well-observed drawings of daffodils. In Years 3 and 4, current work is strongly linked to geography, within the topic, *Improving the School Grounds*. The pupils have looked at monuments, including sketches of those in the village, and are designing and making a suitable monument for the school grounds. Pencil drawings of buildings in the village are of good quality. Past work on 'pattern' includes carefully-executed printing and painting inspired by pattern in African art. Costume design work in Years 5 and 6 aims to produce masks and headgear to wear at a carnival. Papier maché bowls decorated in the style of Ancient Greece, detailed pencil drawings of footwear, and textile wall hangings show the good range of work pupils have tackled.
88. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Visually stimulating photographs and artefacts were used well to introduce new ideas, and good questioning extended the pupils' thinking. What the pupils were expected to do was made very clear. The activities were well chosen, well explained, and the pupils showed a great deal of interest in their work. In one lesson, however, the introduction lasted too long, leaving too little time for practical activity and a rushed conclusion. In the other, older pupils were not given enough responsibility for organising their own materials, and opportunities for them to learn from each other's work were not taken.
89. The school uses a nationally recommended scheme of work, which is ensuring that the pupils have a good range of experiences. Teachers use the work of famous artists and craftspeople to stimulate pupils' ideas, including art from other cultures, but this is not yet a strong enough feature of pupils' work. Sketch books in Years 3 to 6 are used primarily for pencil drawing, and are not used enough for pupils to experiment and to develop their ideas in a range of media. Art supports activities in other subjects well. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Although the co-ordinator has not observed lessons, she monitors standards through the examination of teachers' planning and evaluation of finished work. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. By the ages of seven and eleven, standards are in line with national expectations. This is the same as at the last inspection. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory because pupils experience a range of stimulating, practical tasks. These enable the pupils to gain confidence and develop appropriate skills in using a range of materials and different techniques.

91. In Years 1 and 2, pupils fold, stick and cut materials such as paper, card, felt and string satisfactorily. They have enjoyed using these skills in focused tasks such as making a class castle and individual puppets. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 plan their work and communicate their ideas in writing and pictures. For example, they planned and made books with imaginative moving parts.
92. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 follow a design brief to plan their work. However, pupils do not evaluate their work sufficiently to show how it could be improved.
93. No design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection but the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils show that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons using a national scheme of work over a two year rolling cycle and this ensures there is appropriate coverage of the subject. There are good links with the local secondary school which is a technology college. Last year, the college worked with pupils in Years 5 and 6 on a pizza making project which motivated the children effectively and promoted interest in the subject.
94. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. She has ensured that teachers are covering the curriculum but she has not checked that the pupils are developing their knowledge and skills in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

95. Standards in geography and history meet national expectations by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand some of the geographical issues affecting their own village, such as traffic congestion. They survey traffic in the High Street, recording the number and type of vehicles passing through in a given period. Pupils map the village, identifying particular bottle necks. They interview residents and consider some possible remedies, looking in a balanced way at some of the advantages and disadvantages of the steps that might be taken. Pupils compare and contrast their own village with a seaside town in another part of the county. They consider how geographical location determines things such as the range and type of shops, and how these differ between their village and the seaside town. They understand that features of tourism, such as restaurants, are more likely to be found at the seaside than in a country village. They know that its location by the sea means that the town that they study is likely to have related industries such as fishing.
97. In history, pupils study Ancient Greece. By the end of the year, they know that Ancient Greece is located on the timeline before the Roman, the Saxons, the Vikings and the Tudors, but after Ancient Egypt. They understand some of the main differences between Athens and Sparta. For example, they understand that Sparta was a warlike place, known for its army and fighting, while Athens was the seat of democracy and was famous for the drama. They know that women and slaves were excluded from voting. They know that boys went to school, while girls stayed at home and that women had much less freedom than men.
98. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about Florence Nightingale. They know that she was a nurse, who looked after soldiers in a war, where conditions were poor. They have a reasonable idea that this was about 100 years ago.
99. Only two lessons were seen, both in geography. Although the teaching in these lessons was satisfactory, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in these

two subjects. The lesson seen in Years 5 and 6 was very clearly introduced, so that pupils had a good understanding of what they were to do and learn. There were some good opportunities for pupils to discuss with a partner the sort of shops they might expect to find when they visited a seaside town, and why. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported and used an appropriately structured work sheet to record their own ideas. However, many pupils, and especially the most able, were held back because the work they were expected to do independently was too structured, limiting and undemanding. The analysis of pupils' work done over the course of the year shows that this is an ongoing weakness in both subjects.

100. The leadership of history is safely in the hands of the headteacher, who has recently carried out a good survey of work covered by pupils and the standards reached. He has appropriate plans to discuss this with staff and identify areas of strength and areas that require improvement, such as the degree of challenge and independent learning offered to pupils. The leadership and management of geography require improvement. A new subject manager has made a convincing start on ensuring appropriate curriculum coverage and the adequacy of learning resources. There is a need to develop the role, particularly to monitor pupils' learning and the standards reached.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and also at the end of Year 6, when pupils move on to high school. This finding is similar to that of the last inspection, although national expectations are higher than they were then. Pupils have a number of appropriate opportunities to use ICT as they learn in the other subjects. They achieve reasonably well.
102. By the end of Year 6, pupils combine sound with pictures and text to create multimedia presentations. They work towards the production of a *Foulsham School Web Site*, combining some of their written work about the school with their own spoken commentary. Pupils use ICT to program and control events. For example, they write programs to control a fan and a light. They make use of the Internet for research in other subjects, for example as they find out about a town that they are studying in geography by accessing its web site. Work on sensing physical data, such as changes in light or temperature over time, is under developed. Although the school has some good new equipment for this work, staff have not yet been trained in its use.
103. By the end of Year 2, pupils word process some of their stories. They type and print out directions, for example how to find places following a map. They represent information that they have gathered in a graph, for instance concerning the most popular destination on the Norfolk coast. Pupils use games programs to solve problems, such as how to combine different coins to make a given sum of money. They program a wheeled toy, *The Roamer*, giving it instructions to move in one direction or another.
104. Pupils use ICT to produce attractive art work, for example as they work on the creation of spirals in Years 1 and 2. They use the Internet in Years 3 and 4 to find out about Hindu temples in religious education. Their data handling and graph work contributes appropriately to their learning in mathematics.
105. Little direct teaching was seen during the inspection. The one lesson seen, in Years 5 and 6, was taken by the ICT specialist teacher from the local high school, supported by the headteacher. This was a good lesson, in which pupils worked very hard, in difficult conditions, on the production of the school's web site. Pupils were crowded round a small number of laptops and the room was really too small to allow the best teaching and learning. However, a wide range of good resources, such as microphones and speakers, was provided and pupils

were well motivated by a challenging but realistic task. The input by the high school specialist staff is rightly valued by the school as making an important contribution to pupils' experience and to standards. It enables the school to make ICT provision which would not otherwise be possible, and to offer a good degree of subject expertise.

106. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The subject leader has done some valuable work in developing the subject since the last inspection, most notably in providing training for staff and in maintaining and improving learning resources. There is now a need to focus on the procedures and practice for checking on pupils' progress, which are at present largely informal and unsystematic.

MUSIC

107. Very little evidence was available during the inspection. No lessons were observed, but pupils' singing in assembly was of a satisfactory standard. Pupils were seen having tuition for guitar, and there was a little work available in the oldest pupils' books. It is not possible, therefore, to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning, the standards reached or achievement.
108. Curriculum planning is satisfactory, and provides a balanced set of experiences. The small amount of past work in Years 5 and 6 shows that pupils are introduced to concepts such as harmony when they experiment with sounds made by various combinations of notes on keyboards. They listen to and appraise the work of famous composers, such as Mars from the Planets Suite by Holst. Two pupils thoroughly enjoyed their guitar lesson and early progress was clear. The school encourages pupils to develop an interest in music through a variety of activities as well as lessons. Pupils learn the recorder, and musical performances are enjoyed by parents. Pupils were still talking about the recent African drumming day, which they had clearly found very enjoyable. Pieces of music are played as pupils enter and leave assembly, but too little attention is drawn to them. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are weak. Leadership and management of the subject are currently unsatisfactory because recent staff absence has meant that there has been no monitoring of the music curriculum or pupils' achievements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. It was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection. Therefore, no judgement can be made about standards or the quality of teaching. It is clear from discussions with staff and the examination of planning that the full physical education curriculum is planned for and taught, as required. The school has good outdoor facilities, but the hall is small and limits the teaching of indoor activities such as gymnastics and dance. The curriculum is well enriched by a wide range of sporting activities outside lessons, including competitive team games against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110. Standards achieved by pupils in religious education are below those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the ages of seven and eleven. The standards are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is because the school is not following the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils are not taught a balanced curriculum which extends their knowledge, skills and understanding. Some staff lack confidence in teaching the subject and the learning resources are inadequate.
111. Evidence gained from analysing pupils' work and from discussions with pupils shows that their achievement is unsatisfactory. They make insufficient progress in understanding the importance

of religion in the lives of many people and have limited knowledge and understanding of the features of religions other than Christianity. For example, in Year 2 pupils have an awareness of baptism but are unable to identify things that are important to people from different religions. By Year 6, pupils' knowledge of features of the Christian faith is satisfactory. However, they are confused about the key people, festivals and symbols in other religions and they do not understand why people visit special buildings such as temples and churches.

112. In the one lesson seen during the inspection week, the teaching was satisfactory. However, the inspection evidence shows that the teaching of the subject is unsatisfactory overall. This is because teachers do not teach to the agreed syllabus and do not ensure that pupils are making enough progress in their learning. In addition, some teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to teach the subject confidently. This means that the pupils show little interest in the subject and have limited recall of what they have been taught. There are insufficient resources in the school but visits to the local church have extended the pupils' knowledge of Christianity.
113. The co-ordinator is new to the role. She has carried out a detailed audit of the subject which has enabled her to identify areas for development.