

INSPECTION REPORT

**DUCHY OF LANCASTER
CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Methwold

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121046

Headteacher: Mr Richard Houston

Reporting inspector: Jo Cheadle
23233

Dates of inspection: 25th-27th November 2002

Inspection number: 248214

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hythe Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk
Postcode:	IP24 4PP
Telephone number:	01366 728280
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. David Kightley
Date of previous inspection:	June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Registered inspector	English; art and design; physical education; music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What does the school need to do to improve further?
9595	Susan Cash	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and attendance. How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work with parents?
31421	Sue Rogers	Team inspector	Areas of learning for pupils in the Foundation Stage; science; history; geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27225	Anna Sketchley	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; design and technology; religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was: *e-Qualitas Ltd, Langshaw, Pastens Road, Limpsfield Chart, OXTED, Surrey, RH8 ORE*

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Duchy of Lancaster CE is a small village school serving the village of Methwold. The school also receives the children of families living on local air force bases and pupils from beyond the village, who are brought to school by local education authority provided transport. There are currently 83 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven. Pupils are all of white heritage, but from varied social backgrounds, with some families earning low incomes. Two pupils speak English as an additional language, but are fluent English speakers. The overall percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. There are two pupils supported by Statements for their special educational needs. As a general rule, in Years 3 to 6, the school roll is often seriously affected by a high proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school. This is as result of air force families being relocated, or new families moving to the village, often on a temporary basis. Some pupils have attended a number of schools before arriving at Duchy of Lancaster and some arrive as late as Year 6. This has obvious impact on test results at the end of Year 6, particularly as the number taking tests is very small. Attainment on entry to the reception class covers the full range of abilities, but is generally below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Duchy of Lancaster CE Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the school was considered to have serious weaknesses. Pupils now attain high standards by the end of Year 2. Although test results by the end of Year 6 are not as high as national averages, the majority of pupils, including those who join the school at various times during Years 3 to 6, attain average standards in their work and their achievements are satisfactory. The headteacher provides effective leadership for the school and governors make a satisfactory contribution to the school's work. The overall quality of teaching is good, although there are inconsistencies in Years 3 to 6. The school now provides satisfactory value for money for the funding it receives.

What the school does well

- Pupils do very well in national tests at the end of Year 2.
- Teaching in the reception class and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good or better.
- Pupils make good achievements on their starting levels from reception to Year 2.
- Relationships at the school are good and this helps to create a positive, caring atmosphere for learning.
- Pupils learn how to behave well and get on with each other.

What could be improved

- Standards of work in science by the end of Year 6.
- The consistency in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- The work of subject co-ordinators.

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 June 2000. Since this time there has been satisfactory improvement. In relation to the previous Key Issues there have been good improvements to the provision for information and communication technology and pupils' rate of learning is now good. Governors are now well involved with the work of the school, however, key staff and subject co-ordinators roles have not improved sufficiently. There have been satisfactory improvements to the curriculum, with better planning of work in most subjects. Better attention is now paid to the needs of higher attaining pupils, although there are still improvements needed in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. There has not been sufficient improvement in the teaching of science.

There have been improvements in the test results at the end of Year 2 and the proportion of pupils' attaining the higher Level 5 in tests at the end of Year 6 has increased. Pupils' achievements from reception to Year 2 are now good and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. The proportion of good and very good teaching is higher than at the last inspection. Assessment procedures have improved suitably and homework provision is better.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	D	D	E	E*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	D	E	
science	D	E	E	E*	

The school's test results at the end of Year 6 do not compare favourably with national averages or the results of similar schools (based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals). Out of the 12 pupils taking tests in 2002, 7 pupils joined during the course of Years 3 to 6 (three of these during Year 6), and one pupil was absent in the week of the tests. Test results alone, therefore, are not a useful indicator of standards overall. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics was greater in 2002 than in previous years, and, because more pupils are attaining the higher Level 5, the overall improvement trend for Year 6 results is better than the national trend. However, targets set for English and mathematics results for the 2002 tests were not met, simply because the group of pupils for whom targets were set, were not the group who took the tests. Appropriate targets have been set for results in 2003 tests, based on the potential ability of the pupils attending the school at the time of setting the targets.

Inspection findings are that pupils attain average standards overall by the end of Year 6 their achievements are satisfactory. Attainment in science is below average and achievement unsatisfactory. Standards are also lower than expectations in music and ICT. However, achievements in ICT are now good, and standards are rising. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements

about standards in design and technology during the inspection. Pupils do not cover enough work in music and standards are below expectations. In all other subjects pupils attain expected levels and achieve satisfactorily.

Children in the reception class and pupils in Year 1 and 2 achieve well. From a lower than average starting level, the majority attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. Standards in English, mathematics and science are all above average. Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 are very high in writing and well above average in reading and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. The majority of pupils are keen to work and learn. On occasions, a few pupils are not as quick to settle in lessons and sometimes demonstrate inappropriate attitudes.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In lessons and around the school pupils generally behave well. Bullying is very rare and pupils and parents are confident that on the few occasions when necessary it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Good. In the main, pupils get on well with each other and develop good, respectful relationships with adults in school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Authorised and non-authorised absences are similar to national averages. There are no significant problems with pupils' punctuality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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 overall quality of teaching is good. The proportion of good and very good teaching throughout the school is higher than found during the last inspection and this means that pupils' learning and the standards they attain are improving. Teaching in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 is at least good and often very good. Teaching in English throughout the school is good. In mathematics, teaching is at least good in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2, and pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in lessons. In Years 3 to 6, mathematics teaching is satisfactory. Sometimes, the higher attaining pupils do not learn as well as others in mathematics lessons, because challenges set for them are too easy. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been suitably implemented and basic skills are taught appropriately. In most subjects, teachers plan effectively for the needs of mixed age and ability classes.

There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 and teachers' subject knowledge in science is not good enough in these year groups. Consequently pupils do not learn as well as they should in lessons and standards are below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are now learning well

in ICT, as a result of new resources and teachers' much improved knowledge, understanding and confidence in the subject.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. It is now better planned and gives more effective guidance to teachers. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage (reception class) is good. However, there are still areas for development in the range of learning opportunities planned for science, music and PSHCE (personal, social, health and citizen education).
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are suitably supported in the majority of lessons. Some pupils need particular help with behaviour and the school is developing ways to make the best provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. Planned opportunities for spiritual development in lessons are less evident than through assemblies and special celebrations. Pupils' develop appropriate awareness of their own culture, but have fewer opportunities to experience and understand other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has a caring and friendly ethos that supports pupils learning. Teachers know their pupils well and better use is now being made of assessment information to plan for future learning.

Parents have positive views of the school. While the majority are keen to encourage their children's learning, some parents do not play an active enough role in supporting the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides clear a direction for the future work and improvement of the school, supported suitably by governors. The roles of other key staff and subject co-ordinators are not well developed and the impact of their work on whole school developments is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors' involvement in the work of the school is much improved since the last inspection. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities appropriately and are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school now makes sensible use of information available to assess how well they are doing and plan for future developments. An effective process of self-evaluation is in place that involves all members of staff, parents and governors. The monitoring of teaching and learning is less effectively carried out and as yet does not encourage improvement where there are inconsistencies.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made well thought out decisions about the best way to spend available finances to have the most positive impact on pupils' standards. Resources are used appropriately and educational and financial decisions are appropriately considered to help the school decide whether it is providing best value for money. Staffing provision and resources are satisfactory. The school has good, clean and attractive accommodation. The school achieves satisfactory

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of parents feel very confident about approaching the school with suggestions and concerns. • Parents feel that the school expects their children to work hard and behave well. • Most parents believe that teaching at the school is good. • Most parents are happy that their children are making good progress at the school. • Most parents are happy with the information that the school provides about how well their children are doing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents think that the amount of homework provided is not appropriate. • A few parents think that the school could work more closely with them. • Some parents think that the range of extra-curricular activities could be improved.

Inspection findings agree with parents about those areas that please them most. Inspection judgments are that a suitable amount and range of homework is provided for most pupils and provision has improved since the last inspection. The school makes efforts to work with parents, but some parents do not respond as positively as they could. Although parents are happy to attend school events when their children are involved, other arranged meetings are poorly attended. The range of extra-curricular activities is appropriate for a school of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of work are **average** overall and pupils make **satisfactory** achievements.

Strengths

- Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 are above average and a good proportion of pupils attain at the higher Level 3.
- A higher proportion of pupils now attain at the expected level or above in mathematics tests at the end of Year 6.
- A good proportion of pupils attain the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics tests at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology.

Areas for development

- Pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6.
 - Boys' attainment in mathematics.
 - Standards in science.
 - Standards in music and design and technology.
2. Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 have improved significantly since the school was last inspected. In the 2002 tests, pupils attained very high results in writing, well above average results in mathematics and above average results in reading. The rate of improvement in test results is much better than the national trend, and in all three subjects, a larger proportion of pupils attain at the higher Level 3 than the national average. Good provision is made for the highest attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, ensuring that they attain appropriate levels in tests and class work. Over the past three years, test results in writing have been better than results in reading. Priority attention has been given to developing pupils' writing, and average scores have been significantly better than national scores. The school's average scores in reading have been similar to or slightly better than national scores. The development of reading is now to be emphasised to ensure that rates of improvement and levels of pupils' attainment are in line with those in writing.
 3. For the most part, those children who start at the school in the reception class remain at the school to take tests in Year 2. This is not the picture through Years 3 to 6, where pupil mobility is very high. Of the 12 pupils who took tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, seven joined the school at various times from Year 3 onwards, three pupils started at the school in Year 6, and one joined in the week of the tests. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment in national tests, based on the profile of pupils who are attending the school when the targets are set. In the 2002 tests, the set targets were not attained, simply because the group of pupils taking the tests were not the same group for whom the targets had been set. Based on the pupils who are currently at the school and due to take tests in 2003, the school has set appropriate targets for the percentage of pupils who should attain the expected levels.
 4. Attainment on entry to the school is mixed, but generally below average. During their time in the reception class and through Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and standards of work are

above average by the end of Year 2. This is the result of consistently good teaching in these year groups and also because the rate of pupil mobility prior to Year 3 is negligible. The school has carefully tracked the achievements of pupils who begin in the reception class and remain at the school until the end of Year 6. Of this group, the vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory achievements and attain the standards expected of them. However, through Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievements are affected by the very high pupil turnover that is a consistent feature of the school. Pupils who join the school in these year groups are often those with particular learning or emotional needs. The time that it takes for them to settle to their new learning environment is often not long enough for them to achieve well enough to attain the standards of which they are potentially capable. Moreover, the "settling period" for new pupils often has an impact on the dynamics of the whole class, meaning that rates of learning for other pupils are also sometimes affected. At present, the school's programme for personal and social education does not support pupils well enough in dealing with this situation. In addition, the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is sometimes inconsistent and teachers' subject knowledge is not as good as it should be in some subjects, particularly in science. The result of all these factors is that pupils do not achieve as well through Years 3 to 6 as they do in other year groups. This is an area for improvement.

5. In 2002, test results by the end of Year 6 were well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Pupils' results in mathematics showed an improvement on the previous year. A higher proportion of pupils attained Level 5 in English and mathematics than in the previous year's tests. However, because the school's test cohorts are very small and have particular characteristics as explained previously, analysis of results provides little helpful evidence of general attainment. Inspection judgements are that in the current Year 6, standards of work in English and mathematics are average overall. In science, standards attained are below average and pupils do not achieve well enough, because the curriculum and the quality of teaching in this subject are not yet good enough. Boys and girls attain similar standards, except in mathematics, where girls do better than boys. Pupils with special educational needs attain appropriate standards in all three subjects. Their achievements in science are generally satisfactory as the level of work set for them is more suitable than for other pupils.
6. In information technology pupils are now achieving well, but not yet attaining the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Word processing skills are suitably accomplished, but other aspects of attainment in ICT are in the early stages. None the less, there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. In music, pupils do not attain the expected levels because learning opportunities are limited and the curriculum is by and large devoted to the development of singing skills. In this aspect of music pupils make suitable achievements, but in general, achievement in music is unsatisfactory. In all other subjects of the curriculum, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations by the end of Year 6 and rates of achievement are satisfactory. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Standards are satisfactory overall.

Strengths

- The school has a very friendly working atmosphere and relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are good.

- Behaviour around school is good and pupils and their parents are confident that there is little bullying.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility.

Areas for development

- The attitudes of a few pupils who do not have consistently positive attitudes to their work and sometimes disrupt the learning of others.
8. Pupils' attitudes to their lessons are sound. Most listen attentively and are keen to answer questions or volunteer ideas when the whole class is working with the teacher. When they are required to work on their own, some pupils are slow to settle. They chat with their neighbour and need much re-assurance from their teacher. There are a few pupils in each class, but particularly in Years 3 to 6, who, despite the efforts of the teachers, do not always behave appropriately. This slows the pace of lessons, sometimes disrupting the learning of others. Some pupils do not take pride in the appearance of their work.
 9. Around school, for example in assemblies and at lunchtimes, pupils behave well. They play happily together in the playground, with older ones helping to look after the younger. Pupils spoken to were confident that there was no bullying, while parents affirmed that any incidents that do arise are dealt with quickly. Pupils and adults alike comment on the friendliness of the school and value its family atmosphere. Relationships are good and pupils are polite and helpful. Adults provide good role models and support pupils as they learn to consider the feelings of others. Pupils know how they should behave, even if they don't always choose to conform. There have been no permanent exclusions for several years. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are at a similar standard to that found by the previous inspection.
 10. The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A school council has recently been formed and this has given pupils the opportunity to make suggestions as to how they would like quite considerable sums of money to be spent. They have chosen the paint colour for the toilets and are discussing playground improvements. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been learning to write instructions and suggested that their instructions for washing your hands should be put in the toilets, which the school council approved. Pupils take good care of the school environment. Throughout the school, pupils take it in turns to be monitors and to perform helpful tasks. Older pupils willingly look after the younger ones. Six pupils have responsibility for leading one of three houses and collecting house points each week. Opportunities in lessons for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning are more limited. Levels of attendance are broadly in line with those in primary schools across the country, as are rates of unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive punctually in the mornings.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is **good** overall.

Strengths

- The proportion of good and very good teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching is of a consistently high quality in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching in English is good throughout the school.
- Pupils learn very well in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.

Areas for development

- The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6, to ensure consistency.
 - Teachers' subject knowledge in science in Years 3 to 6.
 - Rates of learning in science and some aspects of mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
 - Learning in music throughout the school.
12. Teaching and learning were judged to be very good in 18 out of the 24 lessons observed during the inspection. Very good teaching was observed in all year groups and was characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils, teachers' good knowledge of pupils and their needs and an appropriate match of work to these needs. In many lessons teachers plan successfully for the range of ages and abilities in their classes, including those pupils with special educational needs who have clear and suitable individual education plans to support their learning where this is necessary. Pupils with special educational needs make the same rates of learning in most lessons as other pupils. On occasions, however, learning for special needs pupils in some mathematics lessons is not as good as it could be, because the work set for them is too difficult.
13. In the reception class and for pupils in Years 1 and 2, teaching is always at least good and often very good. The school has responded well to the needs of the very youngest children by making provision for them to work as a single age reception group with a temporary member of staff. The adult in charge of this group has yet to complete her teaching qualification, but already has an impressive understanding of how young children learn and the specific needs of her group. She has established a friendly, caring and stimulating environment for learning. Children have clear routines for working, are developing good learning habits and achieving well in their knowledge and understanding. In reading activities, for example, the teacher's very enthusiastic demonstrations encouraged children to pay attention, follow script carefully and attempt reading with real expression. Because children were happy and comfortable, they "read" from the text by recalling the story heard previously, while following words with their finger.
14. In Years 1 and 2, the teacher's rigorous attention to the needs of individuals ensures that work is very appropriate for pupils, supporting new learning at a suitable level and providing the necessary challenge for higher attaining pupils. This is particularly difficult as the group is of mixed age and has a very wide range of ability and personal and social skills. In a mathematics lesson with these year groups, the teacher had very carefully grouped pupils for introduction and follow-on activities. Younger and lower attaining pupils learned well together, carrying out a very practical activity that consolidated thinking and counting skills. The self-esteem of one special needs pupil was much encouraged during this session, as he was able to demonstrate an already acquired skill. The teacher capitalised well on the opportunity for this pupil to lead others. Higher attaining pupils were provided with a very interesting and appropriately challenging measuring activity. Working with standard measures, they cut out an exact fit drawer liner for their own drawer. They were keen and interested and applied their learning well. They made progress in their measuring accuracy. The impact of this consistently high quality of teaching in reception and Years 1 and 2 is that pupils develop good attitudes to learning and achieve well by the end of Year 2.
15. In Years 3 to 6 some very good teaching was also observed. In a lesson with pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, the teacher's good subject knowledge in geography ensured that very appropriate resources were chosen to stimulate learning. The lesson was very well organised and pupils were given clear timings for activities. For this reason, they behaved well and gave

full attention to the task in hand. The pupils made good gains in their understanding of how and why weather varies from place to place. In an English lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils, very clear expectations were set from the beginning of the session in relation to behaviour and attitudes to work, and a clear aim was set for what the pupils would learn. Pupils built well on their previous learning by making use of a checklist they had compiled for what a good set of instructions should include. All pupils, but particularly higher attaining pupils, were really challenged to explain their ideas in full. Rates of learning were very good in this session. However, teaching and learning are sometimes inconsistent in these year groups. In the two unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection, both in Years 3 to 6, the key areas for development were the use of time, the pace and which pupils learnt and teachers' subject knowledge. When teachers were not confident with the subject, planning was not good enough and lessons lacked purpose. As a result, pupils were not interested in the work and time was wasted in trying to keep them on task.

16. Pupils do not learn well enough in science in Years 3 to 6. This is partly because the curriculum for science is not as well planned and implemented as in other subjects and partly because teachers in these year groups do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. In a lesson with Year 3 and 4 pupils, although resources were well prepared, lesson planning contained no indication of a match of work to the mixed age groups and abilities in the class. There was no clear understanding that scientific skills would be less developed for the younger or lower attaining pupils and all were required to begin at the same starting point. Higher attaining pupils carried out the experiment reasonably well, but other pupils were unsure of what was required of them had did not have sufficient prior understanding to tackle the work confidently. As a consequence their application to the task was half-hearted and behaviour deteriorated. The challenge to higher attaining pupils was insufficient and they did not utilise their understanding of fair testing fully. In some mathematics lessons, challenge for the highest attaining pupils is not good enough. Sometimes pupils finish tasks too quickly and with little thought simply because they are too easy.
17. Teaching in English is good throughout the school. Teachers make good use of the national strategy for literacy, but are also confident in their own understanding and skills in the subject. This means that lessons are made very appropriate to pupils and they are interested in their work. In a lesson with Year 1 and 2 pupils' clear expectations about behaviour and work to be completed ensured that all pupils were on task and behaved well. Social and personal skills were developed in this way, as the pupils were required to wait patiently to take their turn and then answer so that all could clearly hear individual contributions. In a very good poetry session with Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher's clearly planned lesson enabled smooth organisation and a very good working environment was established. Poetry reading was demonstrated well and the pupils were encouraged to give equally engaging renditions. The teacher's good subject knowledge enabled very clear explanations of the use of noun and verb and the power of similes in poetry. Pupils behaved well because they were enthused and interested in their work.
18. Pupils do not make enough progress in music. There are no teachers with well-developed musical competencies at the school and the use of specialist teachers from outside sources is very expensive for a small school. Teachers sing with pupils in lessons, but the development of composition skills is limited and really only happens in Years 5 and 6. A new ICT program is now being used to introduce a wider range of music skills and knowledge. There have been a few technical problems that have so far hindered its use. Pupils listen carefully to music during assembly times and know the names of some composers. The curriculum is not taught well enough, however, and learning is therefore unsatisfactory.

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

19. Overall curriculum provision is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Curriculum balance and organisation has improved since the last inspection.
- The curriculum for pupils in the reception class is of a good quality.
- There are good cross-curricular links between subjects.

Areas for development

- Personal, social, health and citizenship education.
- Ways to encourage and enable better participation in school clubs.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual development in lessons and opportunities for them to experience and learn about other cultures.

20. The school curriculum is now satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. It is well organised, balanced and covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Worked is planned for each strand of learning in ICT and there is a satisfactory curriculum for each subject with the exception of science. As a result standards in most subjects are in line with national expectations. The Foundation Stage curriculum for pupils in the reception class is good. It provides children with ample opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding in subjects, supported by the acquisition of learning skills that help them to achieve well. Good, early focus is placed on reading and writing skills, providing children with the tools necessary to learn in all areas of the curriculum.
21. The amount of time allocated to each subject now match national recommendations and class timetables are well arranged in the main. Each class contains pupils of two age groups. The planning for these classes is appropriately arranged, using a two-year rolling programme for religious education, history, geography and science. Appropriate use is made of national guidance documents to organise a long-term plan, the "curriculum map". There is also a half-termly overview plan for English and mathematics lessons. Weekly planning sheets further supplement both subjects by listing the learning objectives to be taught. It is now clear, therefore, what pupils are expected to learn in each year of their life at school. The school has worked hard to introduce the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and both have been appropriately implemented. Standards of work in English and mathematics are improving steadily, showing the impact that improvements to curriculum management and planning are having on pupils' attainment.
22. Personal, social and health education is still developing. Circle time is used to teach personal education and to allow pupils to express their feelings. There is a clear policy that underpins the school's approach, but it is not yet tied to a scheme of work, nor is specific curricular time allocated. Elements of health and sex education are satisfactorily planned as part of science lessons. This is an area for development within the curriculum. Pupil mobility through Years 3 to 6 is high, and constant changes to the class make up are unsettling. Because the school does not yet have a consistent and rigorous approach to the development of appropriate and accepted behaviour and good learning habits, specifically for those few pupils who find this very difficult, lessons can occasionally be disrupted.

23. Good links with other subjects are being developed. This ensures maximum use of time, as well as making work relevant for pupils. Links through English, geography and history are especially good. For example, in a typical history lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils pretended to be evacuees during the Second World War and wrote letters home. In this way they learned history and practised their English skills. Opportunities for literacy across the curriculum are good because of such links, and there are plenty of chances for pupils to read. Opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum are not as well developed, although references are made to mathematics in science and geography. Pupils are encouraged to make good use of their ICT skills in other subjects and teachers' planning makes frequent reference to the use of ICT. Day visits are included in the planning to supplement and enrich the curriculum. Pupils make residential visits to the Church of England run Horstead Centre twice during their time in Years 5 or 6. Here they participate in physical activities while experiencing the spiritual ethos of the church. There is an annual book week in which the whole school is involved. Visitors to school include musicians and theatre groups. A satisfactory programme of extra curricular activities also supports the curriculum. Clubs have been introduced to support learning in physical education and music. For a variety of reasons, including arrangements for transportation from school at the end of the day, the take up of these clubs and the commitment of those few who choose to attend has been disappointingly low.
24. Curriculum planning makes satisfactory use of the school's sound links with the local community. The head teacher regularly writes an article for the village newspaper. School events such as fashion shows are staged in the village hall and shared with the local people. The school hosted the village Jubilee party and each pupil received a commemorative mug. Local as well as national charities are supported. The new ICT suite has been offered for community use. There are good links with the church. Representatives of local churches take assemblies and Diocesan representatives are regular visitors to school. Liaison with partner institutions is good. There are strong links with the local secondary school, and the nursery schools that feed Duchy of Lancaster form a very supportive network. This ensures smooth transition both into and on from school. Events arranged by the local cluster of schools enable pupils to participate, for example, in sports events and enjoy theatrical productions. They arrange a number of school activities jointly and both pupils and staff benefit from events varying from a theatrical performance of Toad of Toad Hall to teacher training.
25. The school makes good provision overall for pupils' personal development, as was found at the time of the last inspection. Provision for their spiritual development is sound. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the theme of the week during assemblies. Pupils say a prayer before lunch and at the end of the day, which they value and respect. Planning of lessons does not identify opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, though this does happen incidentally. For example, pupils listened with rapt attention to the conclusion of 'The Silver Sword' and gasped with delight at the final outcome.
26. Assembly themes and opportunities for class discussion provide good support for pupils' moral and social development. They are made aware of the needs of others and give generously to charities. In class and through the school council, pupils set their own class rules and discuss difficulties that arise, for example in relationships with each other. A significant number of pupils join the school part way through, but they are made welcome and helped to settle as quickly as possible. Pupils are developing an awareness of environmental issues through their study of the rain forests. Residential visits for the older pupils make a good contribution to their social development and increasing independence.

27. Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound, with strengths in their understanding of Western culture but with too few opportunities for them to learn about non-Western cultures. They listen to a range of music in assemblies, learn about famous painters and their work and are learning some traditional country-dances. The school organises occasional visits to museums and local places of historic interest. During the inspection, older pupils enjoyed a live performance based on 'Wind in the Willows'. The rural location in which pupils are living limits first hand experience of people from different ethnic backgrounds. The RE curriculum introduces them to Hinduism and Judaism, but there are very few other opportunities for pupils to experience, learn about or celebrate other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Overall provision is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and pupils' progress is now satisfactorily tracked.
- Provision for pupils' health, safety and well-being is good.

Areas for development

- Day to day assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Marking.

29. There has been satisfactory improvement in the assessment of pupils' progress since the last inspection. Test data is now used to track pupil progress and to help with planning future learning, and records of academic progress are developing suitably. The headteacher has been constructively leading the developments in assessment work and procedures are now satisfactory. All expected statutory testing is undertaken and records kept, alongside scores from optional national tests and other standardised tests. The test results are used to set short and long term targets in English, mathematics and science using national curriculum levels.
30. The use of assessment to assist teachers when planning lessons is satisfactory. Test results are analysed carefully, highlighting weaker areas to focus on in future teaching and learning. As yet, however, test analyses are not as useful as they might be because the process does not include all national tests taken and the information is not always disseminated to all staff. Day to day assessment has improved. Weekly planning sheets throughout the school are used to record those pupils who have made significantly different progress to the majority in English, mathematics and science. These records are used for planning work and for supporting reporting at the end of each year. This system has not yet been fully utilised in other subjects to provide a clear steer for future lessons.
31. Individual pupil guidance on their work is also satisfactory overall. It is good in the reception class and Years 1 and 2. Teachers in these year groups are very clear in explaining to pupils why they have done well and where they must try harder. In general, marking is not monitored sufficiently and is currently inconsistent. The best marking is positive and informative, telling pupils what they have achieved. Weaker marking is just a series of ticks, and in some lessons in Years 3 to 6 it does not happen at all. Reports home to parents are clear about areas of development for pupils. Half termly targets for pupil improvement are also set in home-school contact books. Pupils all have individual portfolios of work to provide evidence of the progress

they are making. However, noted strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work in science and subjects other than English and mathematics are not referred to regularly enough in all classes, to be useful for planning future learning.

32. Pupil target setting, that is, telling pupils what work they need to cover next, is generally therefore still in its infancy. The school is planning a training initiative to include target setting. Target setting is already well underway in Years 1 and 2, where pupils have their own beautifully presented book, listing targets achieved.
33. The school is a caring environment, where adults know the pupils well. Procedures for child protection are well in place and understood by all who work in the school. The safety and well-being of pupils is ensured by regular risk assessments, fire drills and equipment checks. Several adults have first aid qualifications. Sex and drugs education is taught through the science curriculum. This good provision has been maintained since the last inspection. The school has sound systems for monitoring and improving attendance and punctuality.
34. Teachers work hard to maintain discipline within their classrooms. The few pupils who find it difficult to behave well at all times are supported by clear instructions and a generally consistent approach from their teachers. Pupils are made very aware of the standard of behaviour expected of them and discuss the rules they want for their classroom each year, but as yet, a regularly taught programme for personal, social and citizenship education has not been implemented to help pupils learn the skills necessary to behave and respond well. 'Focus sessions' are used to review poor behaviour and parents are involved at an early stage. Pupils value the house points they can earn for good work and good behaviour. The school continues to monitor and promote good behaviour well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The school is continuing to maintain an effective relationship with parents, and the majority of parents have positive views about the school.

Strengths

- The quality of reports is good.
- Teachers are approachable.
- Parents express positive views about the school.

Areas for development

- The curriculum information provided for parents.
- Ways to encourage more parents to participate in the supporters group.

36. The school provides good information for parents in end of year reports. These are detailed and give a good indication of what the pupil can do and the progress made, as well as suggesting ways to improve. Pupils also write a brief summary of their strengths and areas for development. This is good practice. The reports also contain a good overview of the content of each subject of the curriculum. A number of parents would appreciate this information at the beginning of the year, rather than at the end, so that they could support their children's learning at home. The school has offered to meet parents to explain aspects of the curriculum, but little interest was shown, so the events were cancelled. The school is planning to hold an additional meeting for parents to discuss their children's progress in the spring term, which was suggested in the previous report. There is a regular newsletter and posters advertising school events are put on a notice board. Teachers are readily available to speak to parents at the end of the day and are very approachable. However, a few parents feel that their suggestions and comments are not always well received.

37. A number of parents come into school regularly to help, and this makes a valuable contribution to pupils' progress. Most of the younger pupils read at home regularly and learn spellings and tables. Older pupils do increasing amounts of homework, which sometimes includes research. This enables those parents who wish, to support their children's learning at home. The supporters group is currently being run almost single-handedly, by a number of families whose children have recently left the school. In the past it has raised useful sums of money through Bingo sessions and discos for the children. A recent fashion show was not well supported. No parents attended the last governors' annual meeting, in spite of the new computer suite being opened on the same night. Most parents take advantage of the opportunities to discuss their children's progress and come to school performances and services. However, some parents do not support the school as actively as they might.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall.

Strengths

- The school has defined appropriate priorities for raising standards.
- There has been considerable improvement in the involvement of the governing body.
- The school has developed good procedures for self-evaluation.
- Data is being used effectively.

Areas for development

- The use of monitoring to improve teaching standards.
- The effectiveness and contribution of all staff with management responsibilities.

39. The school is being effectively managed on a day-to-day basis and the leadership of the headteacher is good. He has worked well to maintain moral and positive attitudes since the last inspection, ensuring that the motivation to develop and improve has remained high. Data on standards in English and mathematics has been effectively gathered and analysed and pupils' progress is tracked individually. While test results at the end of Year 6 are severely affected by the comings and goings of pupils, standards of work have improved over the last two years. There has been particularly good improvement in work and test results by the end of Year 2. There remain some outstanding issues from the last inspection, but the school's plan for improvement is clearly drawn up and contains a number of appropriate priorities. These are supported by careful financial management and clear ways of measuring whether the actions taken have been successful. This plan, the school's self-evaluation and a new statement for aims and values provide a clear direction to continue to raise standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
40. Statutory performance management procedures are in place for all staff. This is an improvement since the last inspection when only an informal system existed. However, although there has been consistent monitoring of teachers' planning, the findings from lesson observations have not been used rigorously as a tool to refine teaching techniques. Teachers are not always entirely clear of where they need to develop and how to go about improving. As a result the inconsistencies in teaching in Years 3 to 6 have not been ironed out and this has contributed to the slower rates of progress through these year groups.

41. The teaching staff work hard and share a large number of tasks. Although there is a clear commitment to improve by all staff throughout the school, this is hampered by the lack of recognition of subject and aspect co-ordinators to their whole school responsibilities and accountability. Some co-ordinators do not effectively monitor their subjects as well as they should and therefore they have insufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in subjects, or of current standards attained by pupils. They do not have prioritised plans for their responsibilities and are not fully involved in improvement strategies. There has not been enough improvement in this area since the last inspection.
42. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and members have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Good communication exists between them and the headteacher, and they are supportive of each other in the work of the school. Governors are reflective in their practice, asking appropriate questions about their committee structure and their roles and responsibilities. They are quick to make changes where this will benefit the school. Since the last inspection governors have become more aware of national procedures and the data used to measure school standards. They take a more active part in the school strategic plan and school self evaluation and have contributed to the monitoring of teaching standards by observing teaching in the classroom. This is an improvement. The governors are supportive of the headteacher. On a few occasions they rely too heavily upon him to provide information and lead work that could be the responsibility of the governing body.
43. Good use has been made of specific grants for staff training, mentoring and induction of new staff and extra resources. In particular they have allowed the school to improve information technology facilities for pupils and to train staff well in its use, including teaching assistants. The school makes effective use of technology for administrative purposes, especially attendance and financial arrangements. The governors gave their consent to allow available finances to be used to provide extra teaching support for the youngest children in school. This has had very good impact on their learning and is an example of money well spent.
44. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, although there is no secure outdoor area for pupils in the Foundation Stage. There are however, plans to develop this provision. The school and its surroundings are clean and well cared for. Teachers provide attractive, stimulating displays in corridors and classrooms that enhance the learning environment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. In order to improve the standards attained by pupils, the headteacher, governors and staff should now give attention to the follow areas for development:
 1. Teaching and learning in science in Years 3 to 6, to ensure that;
 - a. Teachers have good subject knowledge and can teach all aspects of science confidently.
 - b. Pupils have more opportunities to carry out investigations and experiments.
 - c. The highest attaining pupils are suitably challenged.
(Paragraphs 4, 5, 16, 20, 66, 68, 69 and 70)
 2. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching throughout the school, but particularly in Years 3 to 6 to ensure that;

- a. The programme for observing teaching and learning is carried out regularly and rigorously by the headteacher and subject coordinators.
 - b. Teachers have clear feedback on how they need to develop their teaching to ensure that pupils make good rates of progress.
 - c. The school has an informed picture of where teaching needs to improve and can use this information to form priorities for the school development plan.
(Paragraphs 40, 16, 18, 58, 77, and 82)
3. The roles and responsibilities of subject managers so that they are fully involved in checking standards and the quality of pupils' learning. As a result, making improvements in their subjects throughout the school.
(Paragraphs 41, 58, 64, 70, 77, and 97)

Additional minor issues

The school should fully implement a programme for personal, social, health and citizen education to ensure that pupils are taught skills that enable them to learn well and relate with each other positively at all times.

The school should review its provision for teaching and learning in music to ensure that pupils make better progress and attain expected standards by the end of Year 6.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

24

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

13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	10	4	2	0	0
Percentage	0	33	42	17	8	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)	83
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83

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2
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2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR– Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
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2

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16
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16

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
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4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
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10

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7
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7

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

School data	5.0
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5.0

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	0.6
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0.6

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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	6	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	6	6
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	9	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (92)	100 (100)	100 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	4	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	2	2
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	6	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (67)	58 (50)	67 (83)
	National	73 (72)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	5	5	4
	Total	6	6	5
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (67)	50 (50)	42 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	94
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31.3
Average class size	23.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	228604
Total expenditure	240381
Expenditure per pupil	2557
Balance brought forward from previous year	27311
Balance carried forward to next year	15534

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
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

83

Number of questionnaires returned

20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	40	5	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	65	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	40	25	0	5
The teaching is good.	60	30	5	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	45	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	35	15	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	35	0	0	15
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	45	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	50	25	0	5

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

46. Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Strengths

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- There is good teaching overall with some very good features
- The school has made good arrangements for pupils with special needs
- Basic skills are very well taught

Areas for development

- Social skills such as sharing and cooperation are not supported as much as they could be.

47. There is currently one reception class that caters for 5 children aged 4 or 5 and two pupils from Year 1. This class has been specially formed as all the children have identified learning needs. They are being very well supported. Parents' meetings and good arrangements for visiting the school help children start school happily. This group of children entered school with well below average skills and knowledge average in many areas of learning. Considering their starting points they are already demonstrating good achievement since September. They are on target to reach national expectations in their understanding of letter sounds and in being able to count and use number. Their skills in personal development and the other areas of the Early Learning Goals that they are expected to cover are likely to be below average.
48. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons observed were at least good, and at times were very good. The teacher had established very good relationships with the children and has a good understanding of all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum for pupils of this age. Useful assessments of children's work are carried out regularly in order to track children's progress.
49. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is very effective in her role, supporting the reception teacher and providing advice and assistance with planning and assessment. The teaching area is very well organised and has been turned into a very effective learning environment. There is not yet an enclosed outdoor area, but plans are in place to provide one.
50. Children are making good progress with their social skills and are learning to work with adults and to listen carefully. They have below average speaking skills and often prefer solitary play. While the children are also making progress with these skills it is relatively slower than in other areas. This is because they do not have enough structured opportunities to talk to each other and to share toys, for example. Letter sounds and numbers are very well taught, with interesting activities and plenty of consolidation. The children have made very good progress with learning letter sounds and most of them can count to 20. They use and understand words such as more and less than. However, their writing skills are currently very weak. The children find pencil control difficult and struggle to copy words.

51. The children's knowledge of the world has been developed through a study of autumn. They have painted and coloured in using autumn shades and have further developed their creativity and finger control by modelling with dough. They have opportunities to develop independence through selecting activities and were seen using the computer, making models with large construction apparatus and sticking labels in their "office area". They enjoy singing nursery rhymes and further develop their creative skills by singing to tapes. Physical skills are developed through gymnastics lessons in the hall. The children participate enthusiastically, but are still learning to use space in a controlled manner

ENGLISH

52. The overall provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- National test results at the end of Year 2 are good.
- Teaching in English is of a good quality throughout the school.

Areas for development

- The role of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring and evaluating achievement and standards attained throughout the school.
- Listening skills.
- Presentation of work.

53. The 2002 results in national tests at the end of Year 2 were very high in writing and well above average in reading. All pupils attained the expected level or better in writing and over a quarter of pupils attained the higher level, Level 3. In reading, almost half of the pupils attained the higher level. Attainment at Level 3 is much better than the national average. This signifies good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in English in the reception class and through Years 1 and 2. From generally below average levels of attainment on entry to school, by the end of Year 2 standards are above average for the majority of pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well and attain the standards expected of them.
54. The 2002 test results of pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below average. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 increased on the previous year. The majority of pupils who took tests having attended the school for all four years prior to the tests attained the levels targeted for them and made satisfactory rates of achievement. Many of the pupils who joined the school at very stages throughout the preceding four years also made satisfactory rates of achievement during their time at the school, but some had not attended the school for long enough to make sufficient progress towards better levels. This is a general picture of the school's intake through Years 3 to 6 that negates the usefulness of analysing combined test results. The headteacher and English co-ordinator have looked at individual results and patterns of attainment over time. Information from such analysis is now being used effectively to guide priorities to improve the subject.
55. By the end of Year 6, speaking and listening skills are average overall, but there is a significant proportion of pupils who struggle with the construction of spoken responses or find difficulty in listening to others. Generally these pupils are those who join the school at times other than would be expected and sometimes find difficulty in settling, behaving well at all times and

coping with new work. Some of these pupils have identified learning or emotional difficulties and the school works hard to support these needs. Higher attaining pupils are able conversationalists and support their opinions with good examples and “for instances”. Listening is the weaker aspect for all pupils and the school has yet to develop a structured programme for developing better skills, perhaps through social, personal and citizenship work, where pupils learn to listen as a social skill and to show respect.

56. Reading skills are good in Years 1 and 2, but overall average by the end of Year 6, once again recognising that new pupils have joined throughout the course of Key Stage 2, not having experienced the school’s teaching of reading. The good reading skills of many pupils support them well in accessing other subjects, for instance, when following instructions from the screen in ICT. The ability to read well significantly helps pupils with research skills in history, where good links are made with literacy. Writing skills are similarly average by the end of Year 6, although a significant number of pupils do not present their work neatly enough to attain better standards. The school has a policy for handwriting, but practice and expectations are not rigorous and consistent enough to ensure that pupils make better progress. Some pupils spell very phonetically and have not consolidated irregular spelling patterns and rules. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very good understanding of the drafting and reviewing process and amend their work confidently. It is therefore a pity that final presentations are sometimes still untidy.
57. Teaching in English is good throughout the school. In many lessons, teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are confident with the subject and make lessons interesting for pupils. Good links are made with other subjects that make learning relevant, such as ICT, where word processing skills are well developed. In the best lessons, teachers add a personal touch with references to every day situations where new learning will be applied. This was evident in a lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils when instructional writing was being developed. The teacher made very good reference to instructions contained in flat-pack furniture bought from IKEA. Pupils easily identified with this reference and saw the usefulness of their learning. In Years 1 and 2, the teacher enthused the pupils so much that they were very keen to bring cutters and shapers from home to try out the recipe instructions they had compiled. Pupils are interested and excited by their work in English in many lessons and this supports good learning.
58. The co-ordinator for English has a clear understanding of the strengths and weakness of the subject and has contributed well to past improvements and prioritising future developments. She has good management skills, but does not yet contribute fully to leadership of the subject throughout the whole school. While she has monitored teaching and learning in lessons, actual developments and improvements as a result of observations have been insufficient. There is not yet enough recognition that her role should influence the teaching, learning and standards attained in all classes.

MATHEMATICS

59. The overall provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The National Numeracy Strategy has been soundly implemented.
- Standards are very good by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2.

Areas for development

- Teachers' planning of work for the range of abilities in mixed age classes.
 - The level of challenge for all pupils in mixed age classes.
 - The role of the mathematics coordinator.
60. In the 2002 mathematics tests, results at the end of Year 2 were well above national averages and better than those of pupils in similar schools. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls by the end of Year 2. Test results at the end of Year 6 were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. Overtime, boys do not perform as well as girls, although small numbers of pupils take the tests each year and this makes useful analysis difficult. Standards have risen slowly in Year 6 mathematics tests over the last two years mainly due to the more structured approach to teaching brought about by the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
61. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain above average standards and achieve well because they are appropriately challenged. They add and subtract two digit numbers to a hundred. They recognise relationships between repeated addition and multiplication and understand equal and unequal sharing. They work out simple money problems involving two operations and understand the equivalent value of different coins. They recognise and describe 2D shapes, using the correct language, and use centimetres for comparing length. Their recorded work shows that pupils have a good attitude towards the subject, in that it is neat and accurate. Tasks are well presented and properly completed. Learning intentions are clearly written at the start of pupils' work. Work is well matched to the needs of all pupils including lower attaining pupils who also achieve well.
62. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is average overall and pupils make generally satisfactory achievements. However, on occasions, higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and work for lower attaining pupils does not always meet their needs. Scrutiny of work in pupils' books indicates some use of identified learning intentions, but teachers' marking is not always linked to these and does not help pupils to know what they must do to improve. Pupils' work is sometimes not well organised and presented and does not contribute to mathematical accuracy. Lower attaining pupils are sometimes not able to complete tasks because the work is too difficult for them. Work on handling data and making graphs is satisfactory. Planning lessons to meet the needs of all pupils in mixed age classes has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. There is a heavy reliance on published planning that teachers do not always adapt to the wide variety of abilities and needs of the class. Learning intentions are not always made clear to pupils at the start of lessons. This was a concern at the last inspection.
63. Of the lessons seen one was very good, one good and the rest satisfactory. The very good lesson, seen with Year 1 and 2 pupils, was characterised by clear expectations from the teacher about both work and behaviour. During the mental starter good organisation led to more able pupils working with the teaching assistant using numbers appropriate to their ability. During the main part of the lesson the teacher supported less able pupils and, through good questioning techniques, challenged them to think hard about the size of the arch needed for their robot to pass through. In a less successful lesson in Years 3 and 4, a number line was used to subtract large numbers. Some pupils failed to make progress because the numbers chosen were not appropriate to their ability. Although the teacher demonstrated the task, not enough emphasis was placed upon giving pupils a clear strategy to use when working

independently. Neither were there sufficient opportunities for pupils to work examples with the teacher and explain their working to the class. By using the same lesson plan for all ability levels, some pupils struggled to understand and a few pupils did not make as much progress as they should have done.

64. The co-ordinator is experienced and all teaching staff have benefited from National Numeracy training. Pupils are assessed following each unit of work and this sometimes influences future planning for teaching. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. However, the coordinator does not have a clear, prioritised action plan for mathematics, neither does she monitor pupils' work, teachers' planning or standards of teaching sufficiently. Therefore, some weaknesses in aspects of the teaching of mathematics remain outstanding from the last inspection. Standards have risen quickly through Years 1 and 2, but in Years 3 to 6, progress in raising standards is slower. The co-ordinator does not as yet play a large enough role in identifying the reasons for this and planning action to improve standards.

SCIENCE

65. The overall provision for science is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teaching of science in Years 1 and 2 is good.
- There are good links with other subjects to make learning more meaningful for pupils.

Areas for development

- Standards of work in Years 3 to 6.
- Teacher's subject knowledge in Years 3 to 6.
- Challenge for higher attaining pupils.

66. In 2002, teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 were higher than national averages, with every pupil reaching the expected Level 2. Higher attaining pupils did not do quite as well and the number of Level 3 results was slightly below average. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have shown a steady downward trend over the last few years. In 2002 the scores were well below national averages. Higher attaining pupils did not attain as well as expected. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 was below the national average. Standards in classrooms this year reflect the same pattern. Work being done by Year 2 pupils is above national expectations. That being completed by year 6 pupils is below national expectations.
67. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. They follow a good programme of activities including electricity and light, healthy food, properties of materials and life cycles. They are enthusiastic about science and ask probing questions. Pupils carry out science experiments, although there is not a whole school plan for the progressive development of investigational and experimental skills.
68. Pupils achieve less than they should in Years 3 to 6. This is the result of a mixture of low expectations and weak teacher knowledge. The programme of work is designed to cover the knowledge expected in the National Curriculum. However, there is not enough recorded work and pupils have very hazy recall of work that has been covered. Year 6 pupils do not know

what a fair test is and need considerable prompting before they can talk about any science that they have studied. Their work has not been well consolidated. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and learn structured scientific skills, such as prediction and hypothesis. Experimental science is built into some work but it is not well planned and expectations are too low. Higher attaining pupils are given the same work as the rest of the class.

69. The lessons seen and previously completed work indicate that the quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. With younger pupils, lessons seen were characterised by good pace, interesting activities and very good teacher questioning and organisation. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils learned about the differences between old and young animals, engaging in a very interesting discussion and then covering a number of well-paced activities. In Years 3 to 6, teachers worked hard to provide interesting lessons, but tasks were not well matched to pupil ability. In an unsatisfactory lesson observed, the teacher's subject knowledge and preparation were weak. Pupils were expected to carry out a fair test when the pupils had far too many choices and did not understand the principles involved. Marking of work is good in Years 1 and 2 and inconsistent in Years 3 to 6, where it is too often cursory and uninformative. Lesson plans rarely include sufficient challenge for pupils who might achieve a higher level than the national expectation. Insufficient records are kept of work covered, and so the assessment of pupils' attainment is inaccurate. Those retained in portfolios are not clearly levelled to indicate a progression in experimental science or knowledge.
70. A scheme of work has been provided and science topics operate sensibly on a two-year cycle in all classes. There are good links with other subjects. For example good references were made to symbolism, geographical mapping and mathematics, through graph work, in one Year 6 lesson on electricity. Science resources have recently been upgraded and are satisfactory. However, management and leadership of science are currently unsatisfactory. Science has taken a back seat while English and mathematics have been developed, and, as a result, standards have fallen since the last inspection. There has been insufficient monitoring of lessons and of pupils' work so that effective action can be taken to raise standards.

ART AND DESIGN

71. The provision for art is **satisfactory** overall.

Areas for development

- Pupils' independent creativity.
 - Pupils' knowledge and appreciation of art from other cultures.
72. It was not possible to observe art lessons during the inspection, but a range of art work was displayed around the school, providing sufficient evidence that standards are broadly those expected for the pupils' ages and achievement is satisfactory. Art work is used well to create a stimulating and attractive environment for learning in general. Pupils' work is neat and colourful, but similar in style and format, showing little evidence of artistic creativity and independent style. Even in Year 6, work is very teacher directed and shows little imaginative flair or evidence of better than average attainment. However, a good range of materials and styles are used throughout the school and pupils have suitable experience with 3D design with a range of resources.

73. While pupils look at the work of other artists, such as Clarice Cliffe, this aspect of the subject is not as developed as it could be to support pupils' cultural development, particularly through the art work of non-Western cultures. For example, opportunities are missed to link the subject with history and geography topics that would add relevance and depth to pupils' learning and enable pupils to make progress in their understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

74. Areas for development

- The development of pupil evaluation during the design process.
- The role of the co-ordinator, so that subject standards can be properly monitored.

75. At the inspection there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards, although at the last inspection pupils' work met the expectations for their age. During the current inspection no lessons were seen, therefore it is not possible to make a judgement regarding teaching and pupils' response to the subject.

76. Photographs and limited evidence showed that pupils throughout the school are taught to make their own designs and to select and use tools carefully. In Years 1 and 2, good links had been made with science when pupils designed and made a car during their work on forces and motion. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use a well-designed sheet for planning their work, outlining materials and tools needed. They research packaging, design and make books, money containers, slippers, musical instruments and shelters. Good links with other subjects continue to be forged. Work on musical instruments was linked with vibrations in science, and in history pupils made Tudor house fronts. Photographs suggested a good level of completion and finish to pupils' models. Although older pupils take part in presenting their work to each other at the end of each unit of work, not enough attention is paid to teaching pupils to evaluate their work, by identifying what they do well and making suggestions for improvement.

77. The school uses a national scheme of work and two year cycle of projects. This avoids repetition and enables pupils in mixed age classes to successfully build skills. Work in Years 3 and 4 had been carefully assessed by the teacher and included written comments. However, no monitoring of general standards currently takes place. The subject is not being effectively led. There is not a clearly designated person responsible for checking standards and driving forward improvements.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

78. Overall provision is **satisfactory**

Strengths

- There are good links with other subjects.
- The humanities curriculum has improved, with the adoption of a new scheme of work.
- Teachers' good questioning makes pupils think hard.
- Pupils are taught to independently investigate some topics and this makes their learning lively and interesting.

Areas for development

- There is insufficient recorded work

79. Pupils' work is of a satisfactory standard at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Good quality thinking is encouraged throughout the school, as pupils investigate and compare. For example, Year 2 pupils were seen engaged in a comparison of different countries around the world. This involved mapping, packing a suitcase appropriate to the climate and tracking temperature charts in the newspapers. They were very enthusiastic and were soon taking their own initiative and drawing their own conclusions. Year 6 pupils were observed researching and comparing Reading and Methwold through a series of questions that they had devised themselves. These approaches mean that standards in this aspect of work are good. However, insufficient work is recorded, so judgements cannot be made about the whole curriculum. There was evidence to suggest that pupils are using historical artefacts to make deductions about the past and develop an understanding of historical developments overtime. However, not enough use is made of practical resources in some topics to develop a secure enough understanding of how and why things may have changed.
80. Achievement in history and geography is satisfactory overall. Planning is based on schemes of work from national guidance well organised into a two-year cycle to match the two age groups of the classes. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are encouraged to ask sensible questions.
81. Taking past work into account, teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Three geography lessons were observed where teaching was very good. Teachers' knowledge was good and the activities well thought out, developing pupil's thinking and interest. One lesson in Years 5 and 6 was unsatisfactory because of unacceptable pupil behaviour. Work completed previously indicates that teaching of history is at least satisfactory. There are good links between subjects. In geography for example, pupils wrote postcards and letters, so practising their English skills. Very good use is made of ICT. Pupils were seen researching the Internet for information about other countries and using e-mail to correspond with pupils in Reading.
82. Leadership and management of history and geography are satisfactory. The subject leader is knowledgeable and supportive of his colleagues. However, assessment of pupils' work in these subjects is unsatisfactory and the monitoring of teaching and learning is insufficiently developed. Therefore, standards and progress are not checked on enough so that action can be taken to raise standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

83. The overall provision for ICT is **good**.

Strengths

- Provision is now good because of the new computer suite and computers in classrooms.
- The staff, including teaching assistants, have been recently trained and have good subject knowledge.
- A thorough scheme of work is in place that links well with other subjects.

Areas for development

- The use of ICT in other subjects.
- The role of the coordinator, especially in monitoring standards across the school.
- The use of computers to support subjects in the classroom.

84. Standards in ICT, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, are below those expected nationally, but pupils are now achieving well and there is clear capacity to improve levels of attainment. This is good improvement since the last inspection. Provision through the new ICT suite is good and pupils are attaining high standards in word processing work. Modelling, that is making use of the computer to explore various situations and make predictions and decisions, and computer control work, where the computer is given instructions to affect the working of an independent object, for example, have not yet been fully covered. However, both aspects are planned parts of the curriculum.
85. During the inspection there was little evidence of pupils using computers in the classrooms to support their learning in lessons. This remains a concern from the last inspection. However, the suite is timetabled and well used. Pupils are systematically taught keyboard skills and there is evidence of some good pieces of work from all year groups.
86. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make attractive menus linked to their science work on health and growth. They learn to enter text, obtain capitals and use the delete function. Rules are displayed in the class computer area and pupils are supported by instructions for printing. They learn to use correct terminology such as mouse, keyboard, printer, monitor and CD ROM. "Tattybogle" illustrations for their writing are good examples of their ability to use a simple drawing package. Pupils make labels by selecting a suitable size and font. During their geography work they used the Internet to find and print a flag. In a sequencing exercise in a literacy lesson, they used word processing skills to write "How to clean my teeth".
87. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory ability with a range of tools. When making pictures they use shape and fill, change font, size and colour and combine text with graphics. They draw and label diagrams of plants and design robots. By the end of Year 6 they satisfactorily use word processing skills to write news reports. No evidence was seen of pupils using data handling packages, but in discussion with pupils they demonstrate good understanding of the characteristics and use of data collections on the computer.

MUSIC

88. The overall provision for music is **unsatisfactory**.

Areas for development

- Overall provision to ensure that pupils experience the full National Curriculum for music.
 - Leadership and management of the subject.
89. Pupils were heard singing in assemblies and in some classes, but no specific teaching and learning was observed in music. Singing was tuneful and enthusiastic. Pupils learn the words to songs well and sing confidently. There is a scheme of work for the subject, based on a published scheme and recommendations from national guidance have been followed. However, the aspect of musical composition is underdeveloped and the school has no teachers who feel competent to lead learning in music. The school can make use of musical provision from the authority, by using specialist teachers, but this has to be paid for and the school budget does not stretch to such expense. Pupils are involved with community events where singing and performance skills are developed and there have been links with other school when pupils have been able to listen to and appreciate musical performances as part of the audience.

90. The role of music co-ordinator is currently vacant, although the headteacher has been carrying out a caretaking role. This situation is unsatisfactory as there is currently no member of staff with sufficient musical skills to make the necessary impact on standards. There have been resources purchased to develop music through ICT. The composition programs are good fun and lively for pupils. However, pupils work independently with the program and need headphones to do so. At the time of the inspection headphones had been ordered but not received. It is evident that the school recognises the concerns regarding music provision and are seeking ways to ensure that pupils make at least satisfactory achievements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

91. The provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Strength

- Good use has been made of national guidance for physical education.
92. It was possible to observe one lesson during the course of the inspection. This was a good lesson, and pupils made good progress in the development of gymnastic skills. Discussion with pupils and evidence from school records indicate that pupils' standards are broadly those expected nationally. No judgements could be made about the overall quality of teaching and learning at the school.
93. The school has used national guidance for PE well and the curriculum is suitable to the needs of the pupils. It includes all elements of the National Curriculum for PE and pupils talked about their swimming skills and awards, dance activities and outdoor games. Teachers have gained confidence in teaching PE as a result of the guidance provided. The balanced ratio of men and women teachers at the school, despite the small number of staff, is helpful in maintaining good gender attitudes. Pupils are confident that boys and girls can be just as competent as each other in cricket, football and netball. Residential visits in Years 3 to 6 offer very valuable experiences of outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils are enthusiastic about the range of activities in which they can participate outside school. There have been sporting clubs led by teachers and other helpers at lunchtimes and after school. The after school clubs are not always well attended, but the school is confident that the provision is beneficial to those who do attend.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

94. The overall provision for RE is satisfactory.

Strengths

- The teaching in Key Stage 1
- The use of artefacts on display to stimulate interest

Areas for Development

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity.
95. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations of the agreed syllabus. Standards of recorded work by the end of Year 6 consisted mainly of undemanding work sheets and notes copied from books. This was a concern at the last inspection and has not been improved.

However, in discussion pupils demonstrated sufficient evidence that their knowledge of religious stories and ideas is developing satisfactorily and standards are broadly meeting the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Their understanding of the Christian faith is better than of other world religions. They could not recall the names of all major religion and knew little about important people from other cultures who have demonstrated their faith through their lives. As such, learning in RE is not supporting the development of pupils' multi-cultural awareness

96. One good lesson was seen in Year 1 and 2 during the inspection. Throughout the lesson the teacher successfully linked the story about Jesus and the man brought to him on a blanket by his four friends, to the human experience of friendship. Pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of Jesus and his disciples and how they learned from him and helped him. The teacher skilfully presented pupils with opportunities to extend their speaking, listening and prediction skills as well as extending their vocabulary while reading the story with enthusiasm and expression. She held their attention by asking them to express how they felt as the story progressed. Discussion and recorded work was skilfully directed at assessing how much the pupils had learned. The teacher had high expectations of the pupils, both in work and behaviour, and they responded keenly. Pupils could talk about what it meant to be a good friend and could associate this with the friends of the lame man in the story. They gave good examples of recent friendly actions on the playground.
97. There are currently no assessment procedures for religious education and subject standards are not monitored. Therefore the co-ordinator is not aware of the strengths and weaknesses across the school and cannot lead developments effectively. This is unsatisfactory. Resources, however, are good. They are properly stored and accessible. The school has good links with the local church and benefits from the diocesan initiative of the Bishop's Visitor who spends a day in the school each month. Working alongside pupils, Christian values and principles are reinforced and pupils' moral development is encouraged.