

INSPECTION REPORT

ASHTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Roade Hill, Ashton, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121957

Headteacher: Mrs Annette Ray

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Halford
12908

Dates of inspection: 25 – 27 February 2003.

Inspection number: 248307

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant and Junior School |
| School category: | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Roade Hill Ashton Northampton |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Jill Cochrane |
| Date of previous inspection: | 26 January 1998 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 12908 | Mr D J Halford | Registered inspector | The Foundation Stage Curriculum Educational Inclusion English as an additional language English Mathematics Geography History Physical Education Religious Education | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed? |
| 9146 | Mr M Brennand | Lay inspector | | How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 22027 | Dr G Pearce | Team inspector | Special Educational Needs Science Information and Communications technology Design & Technology Art & Design Music | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ashton Church of England Controlled Primary School is a very small primary school which caters for pupils aged 4 to 11. It serves the village of Ashton and its surrounding area. It is part of the Northampton LEA. There are currently 26 pupils on roll, of which 12 are boys and 14 are girls. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, but taken overall pupils come from advantaged backgrounds. On entry to the school, the pupils' levels of attainment range widely, but the majority show average levels of skills for their age. There is a moderate proportion of pupil mobility. No pupils are eligible for free school meals and currently almost thirty per cent of the pupils are on the register of special educational needs. This is above the national average. No pupils have statements of special educational need. One pupil has English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. It provides a satisfactory standard of education in which there are many good features. Its strengths outweigh its weaknesses. Good leadership and management by the headteacher ensure that the school has clear direction. The school creates a very positive atmosphere for learning and the needs of individual pupils are very well known by the staff. There is good teaching throughout the school. Standards in the basic skills of English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with national expectations by the time the pupils are aged eleven. Pupils achieve appropriately and, although costs are high, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- There are good relationships between all adults and pupils in this school, which enable the pupils to feel secure, work hard, have good attitudes to their work and behave well. The school takes good care of its pupils.
- There is a high proportion of good teaching throughout the school.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good and assists pupils on the SEN register to make good progress with their learning.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- The school has a very good partnership with parents and its local community.
- The headteacher provides clear direction for the school. She is ably assisted by a supportive governing body that have a developing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

What could be improved

- The pupils' standards of attainment in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to write at length for different audiences and for different purposes.
- Improve the quality of pupils' work by establishing a consistent approach to teachers' marking and pupils' presentation.

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 January 1998 and since then has made good levels of improvement. The school has had a new headteacher in the last eighteen months and she has developed a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school now has a development plan which provides the basis of a good working document for school improvement. Appropriate policies and schemes of work are now in place. Good levels of improvement have been made in the provision made for pupils with special educational needs and satisfactory procedures are now in place to assess pupils' performance over time. The provision made for pupils' homework is now satisfactory and the construction of a new hall has provided the school with a very good quality working area which greatly enhances the school's overall provision and offers significantly improved eating arrangements for the pupils at lunchtime.

STANDARDS

This is a school where the number of pupils taking the national tests for 7 and 11 year olds is very small. This means that national test results need to be looked at with some caution. There is a great deal of fluctuation from year to year and one pupil can carry a very high proportion of the school's overall results. In 2002, the number of pupils on the special educational needs register was high and the school's results for 11-year-olds reflected this. However, when looking at the pupils' performance at the age of 11 and comparing it with the pupils' performance at the age of 7, there is evidence of satisfactory progress being made by most pupils. The present Year 6 cohort has one pupil. He is working alongside able pupils from a nearby primary school. It is anticipated that improvement will be seen on the results from 2002. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are attaining the standards expected for their ages in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11. The test results for 7-year-olds show a similar level of fluctuation noted for older pupils. However, the current Year 2 group contains a majority of pupils who are likely to reach the expected levels for their age and some will attain higher levels. Standards throughout the school are generally appropriate for the ages of the pupils in all subjects, and whilst this is a secure overall position in this small school, pupils' standards of attainment could be further improved. Most children enter the school with levels of skills which are expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. They make good progress in their learning and achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good. Pupils throughout the school show good attitudes to their lessons. They show good levels of independence from an early age. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good. The great majority of pupils respond well at all times. They move around the school well and play well together in the playground. They behave very well at lunchtime. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. This is a strength of the school. Pupils are well known as individuals, respond well to adults and other pupils and most support each other well. |
| Attendance | Attendance is good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | Good | Good |

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

Teaching is good, overall, throughout the school. In a significant percentage of the lessons observed teaching was very good, and there was some outstanding teaching observed. No teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is well established.

Teachers' planning is effective and teachers are confident in their delivery of the basic skills. Given the wide age and ability range in both classes, teachers manage pupils well. They are well supported by teaching assistants – and the students who were working in school during the inspection. The high proportion of good teaching does not, however, always have the maximum impact on pupils' learning because in a minority of lessons the focus of what pupils are expected to learn is not sharp enough, pupils' attention is not held sufficiently and the pace of lessons is lost. Older pupils are not always encouraged to take sufficient pride in how they present their work and teachers' marking does not consistently indicate to pupils what they need to do next to improve. However,

where teaching is at its highest level, as in an outstanding dance lesson for younger pupils, every opportunity was taken to enable pupils to evaluate their activities, discuss them and improve them, resulting in teaching and learning of the highest quality.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is supported by an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities which include residential experience for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils' individual needs are identified well and the provision of good support enables them to make good progress in their learning |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | There is only one pupil for whom English is an additional language. He is provided for well and makes satisfactory progress in his learning. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good, overall. Provision for the social and moral development of the pupils is very good. Provision for spiritual development is good and provision for cultural development is satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good. The school has good procedures to monitor the welfare of its pupils. There are satisfactory procedures in place to monitor their academic progress and the school is beginning to make use of this information to accurately check on pupils' academic achievement. |

The school has a very good partnership with parents and its local community. Many parents hold the school in high regard. They have confidence in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The headteacher provides the school with clear educational direction. She is well supported by her colleagues |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. The governing body is knowledgeable and supportive to the school. They have a developing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory, with good features. The school is working purposefully to improve the quality of education offered to the pupils. The school has good priorities for development and a clear capacity to improve. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good financial planning ensures that funding is allocated to agreed priorities and there are appropriate mechanisms to check that resources are being used effectively. |

Staffing levels are good and the quality of the accommodation is good. Teaching assistants offer good support in classes. The buildings are clean and well maintained. They provide a positive working environment. The

governing body is aware of the principles of best value and applies them appropriately when prioritising spending. Learning resources are adequate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils like school and make good progress• The school works closely with parents• Many parents feel comfortable approaching the school | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of extra-curricular activities |

The overwhelming response of parents was very supportive of the school and the inspection team agree with the positive points made. The inspectors do not agree with the minority of parents who are critical about the range of extra-curricular activities available to the pupils. They feel the range is satisfactory, given the small number of staff employed at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. To use national test results alone to assess standards is not helpful in this school, where year groups are very small, because each pupil represents a very high percentage of the school's totals.
2. The national test results for 11-year-old pupils have fluctuated substantially over the past few years. In English the test results have been well above the national averages in 1999 and 2001 but fell below in 2000 and very low in 2002. A similar pattern emerges over time when considering test results in mathematics and science. One reason for the sharp decline in 2002 was a higher than average number of pupils on the special educational needs register. The present Year 6 cohort contains only one pupil and he is well on course to gain the expected level in all three subjects and may well attain the higher level. He achieves well and spends some time each week working alongside pupils of his own age in the 'booster groups' organised in a neighbouring primary school. Standards in other subjects are generally in line with those expected for the pupils' ages.
3. When analysing the attainment of groups of pupils aged 7 and comparing their levels of attainment at the age of 11, there is frequently satisfactory progress being made.
4. Reading and writing tests for 7-year-old pupils have risen from a very low level in 2000, to a position which is close to or slightly above the national average for the last two years. The position for mathematics is rather similar, with a consistently rising trend from a very low level in 2000. The present Year 2, although small in number, achieves satisfactorily and some pupils achieve well. They are on course to attain at least the expected level in the national tests for 7-year-olds, and some may exceed this. Similarly, standards in science are appropriate for the age of the pupils.
5. Most children start school with academic and personal skills that are generally at the expected level for their age, although a broad range of skills is represented. They make satisfactory progress and the majority attain the goals expected for them by the time they start Year 1 and some will exceed them. In Years 1 and 2, most children benefit from the small numbers of pupils in the class and the individual attention they receive. Many can express themselves fluently, are eager to answer questions and to put their general knowledge to good effect. Some however, are rather more reluctant to read and talk about their understanding of the text. However, they read the text appropriately in an interactive programme about Florence Nightingale and are able to answer most of the questions posed in the quiz section of the programme well.
6. As pupils move to Year 3, they work alongside the rest of the older pupils in school and they continue to make satisfactory progress through to the age of 11. They continue to make appropriate use of their vocabulary and communicate their thoughts and ideas clearly, and they often build well upon the answers given by others in the class. They are able to work appropriately without direct teacher intervention, for example, when the class teacher takes a spelling activity for each year group in turn. This is undertaken efficiently, and every pupil in the class has undertaken an activity specifically targeted to their year group, and had their work marked individually by the teacher within a twenty-minute period

immediately after morning registration. These older pupils are challenged well in science lessons and use their developing understanding of basic skills appropriately in a broad range of subjects.

7. There are some areas, however, where pupils are less secure in their understanding. There is a need to improve the pupils' standards and confidence in aspects of literacy and numeracy. Given the pupils levels of attainment on entry to the school and the high percentage of good teaching and individual attention they receive, standards in mathematics and English could be higher. Pupils need more opportunities to write at length to become confident writers. They would also benefit from an increased number of opportunities as they get older to draft and re-draft work, evaluating and improving the content and presentation of their work in the process.
8. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. They make good progress in their learning when considered against their prior attainment. The pupil with English as an additional language makes appropriate progress. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well, have a clear picture of their individual needs and support them effectively. Overall the school has maintained the satisfactory position reported when it was last inspected, with the exception of information and communications technology (ICT), where standards have improved and pupils now make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained a happy and stable environment in which pupils are encouraged to build good relationships and are given every opportunity to develop responsible attitudes. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. During lessons they demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm and support for extra curricular activities is good. Nearly all pupils arrive on time and registration provides a calm and orderly start to the day.
10. Behaviour is good. In the majority of lessons observed it was good or better, as it is in the playground at break and lunchtime. However, in some Key Stage 2 lessons children were observed talking when the teacher was talking and not concentrating. This is mainly the result of frustration at the lack of pace and challenge, and thought needs to be given here. No incidents of bullying or racism were observed. However the headteacher explained that there are occasional "fallings out" which, given the small size of the school, can have an adverse effect on all pupils. It is for this reason that, when these occur, the headteacher deals with them quickly to ensure that the ramifications are not prolonged. There are currently no exclusions.
11. Relationships are good. In the playground at lunchtime pupils across the age ranges play well together. The small size of the school has resulted in a strong family atmosphere in which older pupils provide support for younger children and they do this well. Relationships are also good between staff and pupils with staff providing good role models. The headteacher feels that children know that they are valued and that they in turn value her. 'Circle time', in which pupils take turns to speak, is also well established as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme and provides pupils with the opportunity to discuss feelings and the consequences of behaviour.
12. Across both key stages pupils demonstrate an ability to share resources and take turns. Of particular note was a Key Stage 1 Design and Technology lesson where a pupil was keen to ensure that all members of her discussion group had an opportunity to say their piece.

There are numerous opportunities to demonstrate responsibility. Pupils hand out and collect hymn books before and after assembly, they operate the music system, organise seating, tidy away after activities and at the Christmas fair they manage their own stalls. These, together with the annual residential visit, provide good opportunities for developing initiative and responsibility.

13. Attendance at just over 94 per cent for the current academic year is good. Parents are generally quick to report any absences, which means that the school is not required to spend a disproportionate amount of time following up absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. There is some teaching of the highest quality in this school. Teaching is very good in 14 per cent of the lessons, good in 52 per cent and satisfactory in 31 per cent. Teaching was never less than satisfactory during the course of the inspection. This represents an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected.
15. Teaching in English and mathematics is good. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully implemented and are delivered effectively. Pupils throughout the school are beginning to use their developing basic skills well across a wide range of subjects. The high percentage of good teaching is not yet having sufficient impact on aspects of pupils' learning. As a result of this, whilst the quality of teaching is good, the standard of work produced by the pupils is largely satisfactory. This is particularly the case with elements of pupils' writing.
16. Teachers' planning is good. What pupils are expected to learn is clearly displayed in the classroom. These learning objectives are carefully graded to take good account of the wide range of age and ability in each class. For example, in the literacy lessons for the children who are 5 and the pupils aged 6 and 7, in lessons focussed on the story of the Gingerbread Man the teacher's planning contains specific learning intentions, which were largely achieved, for each cohort of pupils.
17. In each class, pupils are managed well and teaching assistants offer good support to groups of pupils and to individuals throughout the lessons. During the inspection, the school also accommodated two capable students who also supported the pupils well. Lessons are generally resourced appropriately and pupils take good care of the items which they use.
18. Where teaching is at its best, teachers' expectations are high, pupils' interest is maintained and pupils show good levels of interest in their work. In this small school, where the needs of individual pupils are well known and where pupils' attitudes to lessons are generally good, effective progress is made.
19. Even though no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection there are some areas where teaching could be improved. The standards of pupils' writing are currently not high enough. This is an issue which, like the improvement in pupils' standards in mathematics, has already been correctly identified for improvement in the school's current development plan. Insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to write at length in order to assist them to improve the quality of their writing. In the scrutiny of written work, few opportunities were identified for pupils to draft and re-draft their work to evaluate its content and to improve it. Also, there is some inconsistency in the quality of teachers'

marking. Positive comments are frequently written on pupils' work and some staff follow these up by highlighting particular aspects of improvement for particular pupils. This is good practice but it is not consistently applied. Sometimes work of a mediocre standard is highly praised. Also, some pupils are not encouraged to take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work, some of which is untidy and badly written. The lack of consistency has an adverse effect on the standards the pupils achieve.

20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate individual education plans are written by teachers and incorporated appropriately into teachers' planning. All members of staff work well to ensure that pupils are well supported and make good progress in their learning. The pupil with English as an additional language makes appropriate progress in his learning. Staff support each other well to meet pupils' individual needs in this school where class numbers are small.
21. The school has an appropriate policy for homework, which is set to consolidate pupils' learning. The majority of pupils are satisfied with the amount and range of work undertaken at home, and the inspection findings are that the provision is satisfactory.

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

22. The curriculum that the school provides for the children aged under five is satisfactory and includes all areas of learning and experience expected for this age group. A good deal of emphasis is placed on the teaching of initial language skills and this enables the children to make good progress in this aspect of their learning. The school provides very good support for the children's personal, social and emotional development that allows them to grow in confidence and to settle very quickly into everyday routines. The school is currently improving its provision for outdoor activities for children in the Foundation Stage. The children are very well prepared for the National Curriculum as they enter Key Stage 1.
23. Since the last inspection, a major review of the curriculum framework has taken place. The school provides a satisfactory, broad and balanced curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The requirements of the Locally Agreed syllabus for Religious Education are also met. There is an appropriate focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being effectively implemented. Planning for continuity and progress has improved since the last inspection. The match of work to individual pupils' needs has improved and short-term plans are more detailed.
24. The school tries really hard to provide what extra-curricular activities they can within the resources available to them. Given the size of the school and the staffing, provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There are opportunities for pupils to receive football coaching from Northampton Football Club. The headteacher runs a science club and there have been opportunities for involvement in netball, cricket and badminton. The local secondary school that has sports college status is developing links to support the school. An opportunity exists for pupils to join an after-school choir within the local primary cluster. The school gives opportunities for all pupils in Key Stage 2 to take part in an annual residential experience that provides outdoor, adventurous activities. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' social development.
25. The quality of provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good. The school works alongside the school nurse to provide appropriate sex and drugs

- education. It has very good links with Roade Secondary School and works hard to ensure a smooth transition for all pupils. The quality of 'Circle Time' is particularly impressive in promoting good self-esteem and confidence. The school has identified specific curriculum time to develop pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship.
26. The school has strong links with the church and local community. It has developed links with some businesses in Northampton.
 27. Early identification of pupils with special educational needs takes place using information from pre-school settings, baseline assessment and through teachers' observations. Class teachers and teaching assistants work very well to support pupils with special needs and together with the headteacher they draw up appropriate individual education plans. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs are good and the Code of Practice is fully implemented. Pupils in both key stages make good progress towards their specific targets as expressed in their individual education plans due to the good quality of teaching and classroom support. Pupils are well supported by clearly written and appropriate individual education plans that identify realistic and manageable steps to be taken to meet targets. Individual education plans are regularly monitored and evaluated by all staff and are shared with parents. The school has received good support from the LEA's Inclusion and Support Service.
 28. The school's overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. The religious education curriculum and the daily act of worship, provide the main contributions to pupils' spiritual development. However, other subjects such as science and music make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
 29. Moral development is very good. Pupils are well aware of right from wrong and the consequences of their actions on other people. Very good teaching takes place through the use of circle time and this provides a very good opportunity to develop pupils' moral awareness.
 30. Pupils' social development is very good. The school provides an atmosphere that is like a big, happy family. Pupils form good, strong relationships with each other and with staff and some of them are long lasting. The residential visit and the singing festival have been good opportunities for pupils to develop socially. Behaviour and social interaction at lunch times and play times are very good. Pupils are kind, considerate and polite to each other. The older pupils willingly give help to the younger pupils. The school provides opportunities for the older children that transfer to the secondary school to socialise with pupils of the same age in other primary schools prior to the transition and this enables them to develop friendships.
 31. The school tries hard to provide for pupils' cultural development, the teachers are well aware of this aspect and the need to further develop it. The school does bring in visitors from different cultural backgrounds as and when appropriate. For example, a Hindu lady recently visited to show pictures to the pupils and to talk about a Hindu wedding ceremony. The school reflects multi-cultural issues in the choice of books it buys for the school library, in their purchase of CDs of music from other cultures and in artefacts used in religious education. The pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but could be further enhanced.
 32. There are limited resources available to the school for the community to contribute to pupils' learning. However, the headteacher is investigating opportunities and contacts for more members of the community to make appropriate contributions.
 33. The school has a policy for equal opportunities and race relations. It is successful in ensuring that all pupils have equality of access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their individual needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. This is a caring school in which the physical and emotional development of pupils is well looked after. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall but are not used well enough to inform planning. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
35. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupil welfare are good. The school has recently updated its child protection policy and this is due to be ratified at the next governors' meeting. The headteacher is the recognised child protection officer and she is due to receive her update training in April of this year. Knowledge amongst staff of her role is good. Arrangements for health and safety are good. The school adopts a belt and braces approach to health and safety having drawn up its own policy but also using that of the local education authority. The headteacher supported by the governing body safety committee does carry out termly audits of the premises. The LEA also provides support. Risk assessments are in place for outside visits but more work needs to be done to complete those for the day-to-day activities within the school. Provision for first aid is good with two fully qualified first aiders ensuring that there is cover at all times. Fire drills are carried out termly and are documented.
36. The procedures for monitoring attendance are good, aided by a pro-active parent body who will generally inform the school of any absence. When they fail to do so the secretary carries out a first day telephone call to find out what is happening. This work has resulted in there being virtually no unauthorised absences. The attendance rate is monitored monthly by the headteacher and secretary. On a day-to-day basis, absence is easy to track because of the small number of children on role. The school awards attendance certificates to those individuals who attend best over the year.
37. The procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are good. The behaviour policy which sets out clearly the sanctions and rewards which the school applies. Children are aware of the school rules, having been involved in devising them. These are displayed around the school and parents are informed about them. The emphasis in managing behaviour is based on promoting the positive with a merit point system which enables pupils to gain certificates for good work and behaviour. Sanctions in the form of loss of privileges are consistently applied for unacceptable behaviour. The school has a separate bullying policy to deal with incidents of bullying. When bullying does occur, both children are interviewed and when required parents are informed. This usually marks an end to the matter. Through assemblies, religious education and Circle Time, the school addresses social and moral issues specifically relevant to behaviour.
38. There are secure systems for assessing and recording individual pupils' attainment and the progress they make in English and mathematics. The school is at early stage of development with these systems and the arrangements for the core subjects are more extensive than for the other National Curriculum subjects. The school monitors pupils' academic progress in a satisfactory manner and is beginning to make use of the information obtained to set targets for improvement in English and mathematics. This is an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected.
39. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The small size of the school means that teaching staff know pupils very well. Stickers and weekly

awards at the celebration assembly recognise acts of maturity and good behaviour and the contact between parents and teachers at the beginning and end of the day provides an informal context in which to pass on information. A formal judgment is made in the annual report to parents and also at the twice yearly parents' evenings.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. At the last inspection the school was deemed to maintain "a strong and effective relationship with parents" and this circumstance has been improved upon. Parents have very good views of the school, feeling that staff are very approachable and that concerns are acted on and followed through. The questionnaire painted a very good picture with parents expressing particular pleasure at the links between home and school, the standard of behaviour and the support given to pupils of all abilities. The parents' meeting was also positive and interviews with parents during the inspection further confirmed this positive view.
41. The school has established very good links with parents. The headteacher operates an open door policy and together with her staff makes herself available to meet with parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the day. This has built trust and provides parents with an opportunity to raise concerns. For children who will ultimately join the school, there is a weekly 'mums and toddlers' group which initiates contact. Once they start Reception, children receive a welcome pack and for older children Newsletters are issued regularly. In addition at the beginning of each term, the school prepares a curriculum sheet with details of the topics that will be covered that term. Parents of children with special educational needs get regular opportunities to review their progress and discuss individual education plans.
42. The impact of parents on the work of the school is very good. The prevalence of parents who work means that very few are able to help out in school on a daily basis. However, they provide very good support for outside visits and there are three pensioners who help out in the school hearing readers during the week and providing support to craft activities. The strength of the school, however, is its vibrant Friends Association which is as important to the school, as it is to the village, in providing a social focus for the parents who live here. Large sums of money are raised annually from a range of events and the funds have been used to pay for a whole new numeracy scheme, literacy resources, books for the library, social events for the children at Christmas and a visit to the pantomime. This year, funds have already been allocated to pay for play equipment for reception children.
43. The quality of information provided for parents on their children's progress is good. There are three parents' evenings per year to which all parents normally turn out. Where they are unable to do so, alternative arrangements are made. Reports to parents on pupils' progress are good. They reflect each individual child and give an indication of their level of achievement and whether this is appropriate to their age. They also set targets to address areas of weakness. There is a comment on their personal development and parents are given the opportunity to comment on the report.
44. The contribution of parents to their child's learning at home is good. The newly revised homework policy was shared with parents and each child has a homework diary in numeracy. Homework is set regularly and the majority of parents ensure that it is

completed with a small number going the extra mile. Parents will also use the homework diaries to comment where there is a concern. The way in which the diaries are used is a good indication of the high level of support. A curriculum meeting on the numeracy strategy was held last year and this was both well supported and received. Following the evening, the school produced a small booklet to give parents ideas on how they can support homework.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with good features. The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported well by her colleagues. Together they provide the school with clear direction. The headteacher has the confidence of the governing body and the school has very strong support from parents. The governors have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they fulfil their statutory responsibilities soundly.
46. The school development plan is a useful tool for school improvement. Priorities are accurately identified and are clearly stated. It is appropriately costed and contains appropriate criteria against which the school can monitor its improvement.
47. The management of special educational needs is good. The headteacher takes responsibility for this area of the work of the school. The provision made for individual pupils is good. There are good procedures for the identification of pupils' special educational needs, and pupils' needs are well known. They are well supported in their learning. This enables the pupils to make good progress.
48. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is monitored effectively and the school is beginning to gather appropriately statistical evidence about pupils' progress. Comparisons with national tests are only of limited use in a school of this size. Equally the role of the curriculum coordinator is fairly rudimentary since a very small number of teaching staff coordinate the whole range of the National Curriculum subjects. Monitoring of teaching and learning is undertaken satisfactorily, but could be improved. There are some inconsistencies in aspects of teachers' marking and the presentation of pupils' work is not consistently tidy. Improvement in these areas has the potential to impact on the quality of pupils' learning and thus improve the standards of work the pupils attain.
49. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of their role in school development planning. They are appropriately informed and have a good range of sub-committees which operate effectively. The governing body contains an appropriate balance of experience and expertise. The school has clear aims and a good level of commitment to improvement.
50. The school's finances are controlled effectively and allocated well to those areas which have been identified for improvement. The school finances are managed prudently and whenever opportunities arise the governors make every effort to ensure that they gain the best value for the money they spend.
51. The accommodation is good and has improved significantly from the position reported when the school was last inspected. The addition of the new school hall has improved the accommodation well. The buildings are maintained to a good order of cleanliness. There is an adequate number of teachers and teaching assistants. The quality of learning resources

is good and they are adequate in most subjects. The school grounds are well maintained and the hard play area is suitable for the number of pupils in school. Pupils of all ages play well together and they are well supervised. The school has plans to complete a separate play area for Reception children during the summer term of the current year.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to raise standards further in this improving school, the headteacher, staff and governors should take steps to:-
- (1) improve the pupils' standards of attainment in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy
 - i. by ensuring that the focus of what pupils are expected to learn is sharply focused in all lessons
 - ii. by developing and using the procedures to check pupils' academic achievement more fully
 - iii. by monitoring teaching and learning more effectively.
 - (2) increase the opportunities for pupils to write at length for different audiences and for different purposes;
 - (3) improve the quality of pupils' work by establishing a consistent approach to teachers' marking and pupils' presentation.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 29 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 9 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 4 | 15 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 3 | 14 | 52 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | N/a | 26 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/a | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | N/a | 0 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | N/a | 8 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 1 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 2 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

The Table listing pupils attainment in the National Tests for pupils aged 7 and aged 11 in 2002 is not included as the number of pupils in each year group falls below 11.

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 25 |
| 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) | 2.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 11.30 |
| Average class size | 13 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 25 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | N/a |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | N/a |
| Total number of education support staff | N/a |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | N/a |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | N/a |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---------|
| Financial year | 33 pupils on roll | 2001/02 |
|----------------|-------------------|---------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 172 629 |
| Total expenditure | 148 363 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 4 496 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 19 420 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 43 686 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2.2 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 2.3 |
| 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 64%

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 25 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 16 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 75 | 19 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 63 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 63 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 44 | 50 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 63 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 69 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 88 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 69 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 81 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 56 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 69 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 19 | 31 | 31 | 13 | 6 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. There are only two classes in this very small school and there are currently 3 children in the reception year. They work alongside the pupils aged six and seven. Children enter the reception year in the September of the year in which they are five years of age
54. Until this year teacher assessment has been undertaken in the first term of the children's full-time experience. Information gathered is collated and compared to baseline assessment across the Northamptonshire LEA. This information indicates that over time, a wide range of abilities is represented and the children's attainment is broadly average for their age. The majority of the children currently in the reception year, however, show levels of attainment which are above average. By the end of the reception year most of the children have made appropriate progress and some have made good progress. Many achieve the Early Learning Goals set for them by the start of Year 1. Some children currently in the reception year are on course to exceed them.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. When they start school, most children display personal and social skills which are average for their age. Some children come to school from fairly rural settings but many have had the opportunity of attending a nursery or play-group on a part-time basis. This helps them develop their skills in sharing and taking turns. They work well together and soon gain confidence in the context of a relatively small number of older pupils. They are supported by a skilful teacher and a capable teaching assistant and benefit well from the individual attention they receive. Teaching is good and the children make good progress in this area of learning. The children achieve well and by the time they begin Year 1 most have exceeded the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

56. Most children start in the reception year with average levels of reading and communication skills for their age. Many soon gain confidence when speaking to others, but some show rather less confidence with reading. Most children make appropriate progress with their writing and most meet the Early Learning Goals by the time start Year 1. Overall the children make satisfactory progress. The teacher and teaching assistant give the children good opportunities to use their developing basic skills and offer them a wide variety of experiences to talk about. Teaching is good. They listen to stories very well and join in well with rhyming words which they recognise. They make good progress in speaking and listening. They develop an appropriate understanding of books, knowing that print is read from left to right and making appropriate use their developing association of sounds with patterns, letters and words. They are beginning to develop independent writing skills and use an appropriate range of marking implements for drawing and writing. Role play activities are used well and are appropriately structured to encourage the children to express themselves.

Mathematical development

57. As with the other areas of learning children start in reception with a wide range of experience and abilities in dealing with number. Some, but not all, are familiar with an appropriate range of number rhymes, whilst others have little knowledge of number sequences. During their time in the reception year most children make satisfactory progress and almost all achieve the Early Learning Goals as they start Year 1. Some children exceed them. Teaching is good overall. Working alongside older pupils, the reception children joined in a number recognition activity in which they wrote on white boards numbers from a hundred-square which had been covered over. The majority of the reception children identified the numbers 2, 4, 22 and 24 correctly but did not always write the digits accurately. They concentrated well over a sustained period of time. They learn about shape in a lesson where the teaching assistant helps them to print shapes of circles, semi-circles and quarter-circles using paint and sponges. They work appropriately with construction kits and have good opportunities to develop mathematical language.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. Most children start school with appropriate general knowledge for their age and make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Almost all reach the Early Learning Goal by the time they begin Year 1. This is because the teaching is good, with activities which are well planned to stimulate their curiosity, develop their powers of observation and encourage them to ask questions and talk about their understanding. For example, where the reception children worked with a student they took turns well in an exercise of floating and sinking. They had a good variety of objects to use which represented a wide variety of materials. They placed them carefully in hoops according to whether they would float or sink. They made accurate predictions, took turns well and clearly enjoyed the activity. They took an active part in mixing ingredients in the making of gingerbread men, following up the story which they had been reading. They made good observations of the changes in shape and consistency of the mixture and took great interest in the changes brought about through the cooking. They were keen to share their finished items with the rest of the children in their class, and wrote letters to each pupil inviting them to eat one, making good links with their literacy work in doing so. They took an active part along with the older pupils in the class, in an interactive history lesson in which they looked closely at the life of Florence Nightingale, and they took part in a quiz about what they had seen. They showed enjoyment in this and were assisted well by the teacher, who knows them very well indeed.

Physical development

59. Children make good progress in developing their physical skills and almost all meet the Early Learning Goals by the time then reach Year 1. They have good opportunities to develop their manipulate skills by using pencils, brushes and scissors. They use equipment carefully and safely and share resources well. Teaching is regularly good, and in one outstanding dance lesson the children worked confidently, along with older pupils, moving to taped music with ample opportunities to discuss their movements with others in the group, refine them and perform their movements for the other pupils in the class. In this lesson of the highest quality they gained a developing awareness of space and rhythm and showed very good levels of control over their movement. Opportunities for physical education lessons using large apparatus are rather limited. Tricycles and large wheeled toys are taken out into the playground and used appropriately, but the reception children do not

currently have an available space for outdoor play in close proximity to their classroom. The school is in process of improving this position. An access door has been constructed and an appropriate space is prepared for the creation of a new play area, which is due to be completed during the summer term of this school year. Play provision is currently restricted, but the position is soon to be improved.

Creative development

60. Almost all children meet the standards expected by the time they start Year 1 and some exceed them. They make satisfactory overall progress. The quality of teaching is good. They are well supported in their activities. The children recognise repeated patterns, are able to mix colours and are excited by the changes they see taking place. They make the most of the opportunities provided for them to develop their skills through painting, music and play.

Teaching and Provision

61. Teaching is consistently good. The class teacher is skilful and experienced in meeting the needs of young children. Lessons are well planned and children are managed well. The teacher is ably supported by a good teaching assistant and, during the inspection, by a capable student. The numbers of children in the reception year are very small and the children's needs are very well known. Learning opportunities are carefully planned and well resourced. Teaching clearly builds upon the children's prior learning and they are given good opportunities to consolidate their learning. As a result, almost all the children make satisfactory progress and attain the early learning goals expected for them by the time they move into Year 1. Some children exceed them. Overall the provision made for these children has improved on the provision reported when the school was last inspected. The children are well prepared to begin their Year 1 programmes of study and are confident working alongside the older pupils in the class.

ENGLISH

62. To consider the results of national tests alone gives the impression that standards in English are well below average. However this is misleading because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group in this school and the high percentage of the school's overall scores carried by each pupil. The current Year 6 cohort which contains one pupil, who therefore represents 100 per cent in the school's test results, effectively illustrates this. Pupils' standards in English are broadly in line with the national expectation for pupils aged 7 and 11.
63. National test results for 11 year-olds have fluctuated over the last few years ranging from very high to very low. The results in 2002 being particularly low because the school had a larger than average number of pupils on the higher stages of the special educational needs register. The pupil currently in Year 6 is working alongside able pupils in a nearby school and is expected to be successful in the forthcoming national tests. The scrutiny of pupils' work in English indicates that pupils aged 7 to 11 are working broadly at the level expected for their ages. Overall pupils achieve appropriately.
64. Test results for 7-year-olds show a similar range of fluctuation to those for older pupils in both reading and writing, reflecting high standards in 1999 and 2001 and lower standards in

- 2000 and 2002. Overall, pupils' reading results are rather better than their results in writing. The current Year 2 cohort contains four pupils who show a wide range of ability. Inspection evidence indicates that they are on course to achieve the levels expected for them and some should exceed them. As with the older pupils, overall levels of achievement are satisfactory.
65. Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils of all ages listen well to their teachers and to each other. Most take good levels of interest in the oral part of lessons. They listen intently and most are willing to make oral contributions. This is particularly so in the class with the younger pupils. Whilst some are quite articulate and make regular contribution to discussion, all are confident enough to speak in the presence of their peers. The small number of pupils in the class contributes positively to a very good atmosphere of safety and security to which the pupils respond well. In the class containing the older pupils there are occasions when some pupils do not listen as attentively as they might, and as a result they are not always able to make accurate oral contributions to discussions. Overall, however, this is an area where most pupils are confident and standards are good.
 66. Overall, standards in reading are satisfactory. Some pupils are effective readers who are able to discuss the content of books well and express their likes and dislikes. Some are rather more reluctant to speak about their reading. Pupils in both classes have access to a good range of books. Younger pupils read the story of the 'Gingerbread Man' with good levels of interest. The youngest children in the class join in well with the rhyming lines that re-occur and show a developing knowledge of the printing as they recognise when the rhyme will start again. Others in the class make good suggestions as to what might happen next in the story. The teacher makes good use of the story over the course of several days, linking the story line into other lessons including mathematics and science.
 67. Older pupils take an appropriate interest in reading. They use information books in a satisfactory manner and read quietly as they wait for their turn when quick spelling assessments are made for each year-group in the class. However, few openly express a love of reading which comes from particularly positive attitudes towards it. Their writing shows only limited connections to past reading and taken overall, there is room for improvement here.
 68. Writing standards are also satisfactory but could be better. This is an area where the school has rightly identified potential improvement. Throughout the school pupils do get opportunities to write, and on occasion write well. For example in Year 2, in an expressive piece of writing about Jack and the Beanstalk, one pupil writes, 'Jack climbed down the Beanstalk clutching his gold. The stalk swayed and shook. The giant gave a terrific roar and little Jack's mother ran inside with terror.' This was part of a well-written account with accurately chosen vocabulary. The story ended with everyone being friends. Writing for older pupils also shows some good features. Often pieces of written work show good openings, which hold the readers' attention. For example, 'TJ's usually a sad-faced eighteen-year-old who lives with his parents, but this was all about to change'. In another example, 'It was a bitter cold winter's night. The grey Fiat Punto rolled to a halt. We was on a narrow dusty road, surrounded by big busy conifers'. However, few of these good quality openings progress into longer pieces of writing which maintain this good standard.
 69. Pupils' standards in writing do need improvement. Insufficient opportunities are offered for pupils to write at length, for a wide variety of audiences and purposes, to extend the pupils' writing skills. Most pupils are acquiring good levels of basic literacy skills but do not always

put their developing writing skills into practice. Pupils have targets for improvement identified in the cover of their writing books, but some need greater precision to encourage improvement in small steps.

70. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is consistently good for the younger pupils and often good for the older pupils. Lessons are planned well and although the numbers of pupils are small they are managed well, considering the wide age and ability range present in each class. Teaching assistants are used well and support pupils well, particularly those pupils on the special educational needs register, who are frequently engaged in exactly the same tasks as their peers. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress in their learning. This high proportion of good quality teaching, however, is not yet having sufficient impact on pupils' learning to raise standards to a level which is above average. Although no teaching was unsatisfactory, there are some areas where improvements could be made to help this position. Across the school there are examples of good quality marking, where pupils gain a good insight into what they must do next to improve their work. A consistent approach is required here to indicate where specific improvement may be made to pupils' work. Equally sometimes, work of an ordinary standard is marked as 'good' and some 'good' work is described as 'excellent'. Care needs to be taken to not over-estimate the quality of pupils' work, and to encourage the pupils to take a greater level of care with their presentation. More opportunities could be created for pupils to draft and re-draft written work, evaluating it and improving it on the way to producing a final copy in 'best' and a piece of work in which the pupil can take real pride.
71. Overall, the subject is managed well. The coordinator has correctly identified strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision and has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve. Appropriate records of pupils' developing academic skills are now being kept and are starting to be put to good use. These individual pupil profiles are being used to set targets for improvement and the pupils can be seen to be putting their developing literacy skills to use in other subjects. Learning resources are generally satisfactory, with a good range of books available for the pupils when taking into consideration the number of pupils in the school. Overall the school has made good progress since the last inspection, establishing the national literacy strategy, improving the overall quality of teaching and developing a good plan which accurately identifies areas of further improvement.

MATHEMATICS

72. As with the consideration of test results in English, the small number of pupils in each year group contributes to the significant fluctuations seen in the pupils' national test results in mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are broadly average for the age of the pupils throughout the school.
73. Test results for 11-year-olds over the last few years have moved between very high to very low, with results in 2002 being very low. This was substantially due to a significant percentage of the pupils in that year group being in the higher categories of the special educational needs register. When comparing the pupils' standards at the age of 7 with their results at the age of 11, most make appropriate progress.
74. Tests results for 7-year-olds do not show quite such a wide range of variation as results for 11-year-olds, and in 2002 results were at a level which was well above average. This was

because all the pupils gained the expected level and a significant percentage of pupils gained the higher level in the tests. Overall, most pupils make appropriate progress.

75. Inspection evidence across the school indicates that most pupils attain the standards expected for their age and some exceed them. In class with younger pupils, almost all are able to recognise the numbers on a hundred square and many readily identify the pattern of numbers accurately when the teacher covers some and asks them to write down the missing numbers. They can easily order the numbers in sequence, smallest to largest. Good teacher questioning offers varying levels of challenge to pupils of a wide age and ability range. All are kept on task effectively. They show a good understanding of shape, easily recognising and identifying the features of circles, triangles and rectangles. One quiet 7 year-old boy knows that four-sided shapes are all called quadrilaterals. He has knowledge of a trapezium, but is not quite sure of its identifying features. In work on fractions, older pupils in the class show secure knowledge of simple fractions, working with wholes, halves and quarters. This work is further developed in the hall as the class use a Roamer (a robotic toy) effectively and make accurate identifications of how far to make it travel to reach a particular point. The Year 2 pupils can successfully program it to plot a course using right-angle turns.
76. Older pupils in the other class are seen to develop this work further as they consider angles which are acute and obtuse. Some are able to identify a reflex angle, but this element of the lesson did not develop significantly. The pupils show appropriate levels of mental agility, adding, multiplying and subtracting accurately. In one lesson where pupils explore the possibilities of classifying information with Carol Diagrams the pupils show a clear understanding of their use. They show a good understanding of shape. In one lesson using computers, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are able to input a formula into the computer spreadsheet and produce charts and graphs successfully. They show confidence in interpreting the information represented on the bar charts and pie charts. On observing a sharply descending line on a line graph, one Year 4 boy perceptively remarked that it resembled the current performance of the Stock Exchange! A scrutiny of pupils' past work indicates that pupils cover fractions, percentage and work with decimals to an appropriate level for their age and they are able to work with numbers and problems at an appropriate level of difficulty. Skills in numeracy are appropriately developed and pupils develop satisfactory levels of mental agility.
77. Teaching is good and this represents an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected. The national numeracy strategy is well established and pupils use their developing skills appropriately in other subjects. Younger pupils were seen to use them well in a science lesson on pulleys, and older pupils used accurate measurements in the construction of photograph frames in design and technology. Most pupils work well and have good attitudes to their tasks in mathematics.
78. Again, as with English, the good quality of teaching has not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' learning to raise standards consistently to an above average level. The school is aware of this and includes proposals in its school development plan to seek to improve standards. The school has recently started to track the individual progress made by pupils in their numeracy work, and has implemented the option tests at Years 3, 4 and 5 as part of its overall assessment programme. This is likely to give a clear indication of the progress being made by individual pupils, provide helpful information for the school in its target setting procedures, and may well identify areas for improvement and contribute to the lifting of pupils' overall standards

79. There is an adequate range of resources available for the subject and these are generally used well. Because numbers of pupils are small, the pupils' needs are well known. The subject is coordinated appropriately and good areas for development are effectively identified. There has been a good level of improvement in aspects of mathematics from the position reported at the last inspection. The school has embraced the national numeracy strategy and the quality of teaching has improved. Further improvement needs to be made in the consistency of teachers' marking and the quality of the pupils' presentation of their work.

SCIENCE

80. As with the national test results in English and mathematics, the science results for 11-year-old pupils fluctuate significantly. However, the trend over the last three years indicates that attainment in science is in line with national expectations. The results of the 2002 teacher assessments for 7-year-olds is very high in comparison with the national average and to similar schools. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils make satisfactory progress, except those with special educational needs, who make good progress.
81. The quality of teaching of science in Key Stage 1 is good and in Key Stage 2 it is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons thoroughly. They have appropriately high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and ensure that all pupils are aware of health and safety issues when carrying out investigations.
82. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They work well together, listen attentively to teachers and show a great deal of interest in their activities. Pupils show much curiosity and enjoyment when involved in practical work, for example when they are observing changes to materials as when they observed that melted candle wax changed back into a solid as it cooled. They are keen to answer questions and make comments about their observations. They handle scientific equipment with care and show respect for safety when working with lighted candles. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the subject, for example when pupils undertook work with shadows, and good links were made with numeracy as they made bar charts to tabulate their results.
83. The curriculum is good, being broad and relevant enabling pupils to develop a good breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills through carefully structured investigative activities. There is good leadership in the subject. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and a keen interest in science. Her enthusiasm for the subject has a positive impact in the school. Some monitoring of the planning, teaching and pupils' work takes place. Planning in the subject is very good and makes appropriate use of the national guidance that provides teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught throughout the school. A scrutiny of the pupils' work showed that curriculum coverage is good. There is an effective assessment and record-keeping system in place that tracks pupils' progress.
84. Resources for the subject are adequate but need to be further developed to increase the stock of basic equipment. The pupils were involved in Science Year and took part in the Big Jump. A visit is being planned to the local reservoir to enhance teaching and learning in a topic on the water cycle and water treatment. Good use has been made of ICT in the

subject with pupils being given the opportunity to use websites and CD Roms to develop their research skills and further their scientific knowledge. The current provision in the subjects shows a good improvement since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

85. During the inspection there was only the opportunity to observe one art lesson. Based on this observation and the evidence through scrutinising children's work and wall displays standards of attainment for pupils aged 7 and 11 are broadly in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
86. It is not possible to give an overall judgement on teaching and learning. In the lesson observed pupils were given the opportunity to make selections from a good choice of materials, for example various types of paper, oil crayons, pastels and different grades of artists' pencils to use in their observational drawings. They were encouraged to experiment and try out these different materials before starting their drawing. Good use of correct language for art education was being used, for example pupils were able to talk about colour, pattern, texture and shape that demonstrated their secure knowledge and understanding. Pupils were encouraged to use their sketchbooks to record ideas that would be developed further in future lessons. Pupils evaluated their own and others' work in a sensitive manner and made valuable, positive comments.
87. Evidence from the wall displays shows that pupils have had the opportunity to use paint to create interesting rocket pictures, to experiment appropriately with printing techniques using cut out stencils and some intricate pattern work has been created making effective use of the computer.
88. Pupils have had the opportunity to study the works of some famous artists such as Van Gough and Leonardo da Vinci. Good attitudes to art education were evident and art makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
89. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and resources are adequate. Teachers have appropriate knowledge of the techniques and skills that need to be developed with each year group. There is a scheme of work that gives progression and continuity in skills development. There is no formal system of assessment for art in place yet. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection.
90. The subject could be further developed by providing more opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively on three-dimensional projects at various differing scales and by making greater use of ICT, for example to create a school art gallery.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. During the inspection it was only possible to observe a limited amount of Design Technology being taught. Based on this evidence, on scrutiny of work and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and a small group of pupils, standards of attainment for pupils aged 7 and 11 are broadly in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The curriculum meets the

requirements of the National Curriculum and satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection.

92. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning. In the lesson observed the younger pupils were learning how to follow instructions, to use a toaster to make toast and to adhere to safe procedures for food safety and hygiene. In Key Stage 1 good links were made with the work that pupils were covering in science on pulleys. Pupils were asked to design and make something that would help the king and queen to lift a flag up to the top of the castle. In Key Stage 2, good links were being made between art & design and design and technology to generate ideas on how to make and decorate a container that pupils will be making out of clay in the next lesson. Ideas for their designs were being recorded in a sketchbook. Pupils examined the ceramics work that had been put on display for geometric forms and patterns. The display and scrutiny of work provided evidence that pupils had been given the opportunity to design and made simple musical instruments, cards, basic picture frames and had evaluated the appearance, taste, smell and texture of sandwiches.
93. The use of national guidance supports teachers in their planning and delivery of lessons. Teachers feel confident in their skills in this subject. Resources are adequate. There is satisfactory subject leadership. The co-ordinator is aware that the control aspect of design and technology needs to be further developed. Monitoring of teacher's planning and displays takes place. As yet, there is a no formal system of assessment in place to monitor pupils' progress.

GEOGRAPHY

94. Only a relatively small amount of evidence was obtained in terms of geography. From a scrutiny of pupils' past work, a review of wall displays and the observance of one lesson, it appears that standards of attainment are broadly in line with those expected by the ages of 7 and 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall.
95. Throughout the school pupils make good use of their own locality and compare it with other areas of the country. For example, work has been undertaken to compare areas of East Anglia, around Cromer, with an urban location. Information has been retrieved from the Internet. A map of the Cromer coast has been generated and appropriate comparisons made. Older pupils have undertaken some detailed examination of the parts of a river and have created an informative wall display for the classroom which accurately identifies the parts of a river from the source in high land down to the mouth at sea level. Accurate identifications of geographical forms such as meanders, flood plains and ox-bow lakes have also been made. The classroom contains good examples of a wide variety of rock formation including limestone, quartz, sandstone and lava.
96. Only one lesson was observed and so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. However, in the lesson observed teaching was satisfactory. The lesson was carefully planned and made good use of a high quality video which effectively followed up the pupils' previous work on rivers. Pupils took

a good level of interest in the content of the programme and showed positive attitudes to the subject.

97. The subject is coordinated appropriately. The school now uses the nationally published guidelines to ensure that the geography curriculum is covered appropriately and resources are adequate. The position has improved since the last inspection when it was reported that no scheme of work was in place.

HISTORY

98. Pupils' attainment by the ages of 7 and 11 matches the national expectations, and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. The school has maintained the satisfactory position described in the last report.
99. Pupils in Class 1 responded well to an interactive computer program used to illustrate aspects of the life of Florence Nightingale. The good quality audio and visual presentation outlined many major incidents in her life, as a nurse in Scutari during the period of the Crimean War. The teacher regularly questioned the children on what they had seen and they used good powers of recall to give thorough and detailed answers. The pupils paid good attention to the lesson and showed good levels of understanding. Some of the content of the video was quite advanced for young pupils, for example, a section of the programme dealt with Florence Nightingale using a wax seal to keep letters secure. However, many of the pupils coped well with this and showed a good understanding of why it was done. A quiz followed, which tested the pupils' recall well and, overall, the lesson was successful. Good use was made of ICT and pupils' speaking and listening skills were promoted throughout.
100. No lessons involving older pupils were observed, but a scrutiny of past work indicated that the pupils had studied aspects of the lives of Aztecs, including population patterns and how the society of the time had different strata. For example, the Emperor was the most important, followed by priests, warriors, artists and finally slaves. Also, the pupils had used maps from different periods of time to illustrate effectively the similarities and differences in the known world over time. In this work, good links were established with geography.
101. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching and learning. However, in the lesson observed, the quality of teaching was good. Good teacher questioning, thoughtful use of resources and good links with other subjects were all positive features in this good lesson. Pupils' interest was maintained throughout and pupils across a wide age and ability range worked well together.
102. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The school now uses nationally produced guidelines to ensure comprehensive cover of the National Curriculum guidelines in history. This is an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected. The presentation of pupils' work could be improved if the pupils were encouraged to take more care with it, and teachers' marking rarely moves beyond ticks and positive comments. Resources for the teaching of history are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Pupils were observed using ICT in both key stages. A discussion took place with the subject co-ordinator and a group of pupils as well as a scrutiny of work. The pupils demonstrated positive attitudes towards ICT in both key stages and the activities were appropriate for a wide age range. The quality of teaching in ICT is good in both key stages. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection.
104. By the time that they are 11, the pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with national expectations across most aspects of the work and have made satisfactory progress throughout the school. This shows satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
105. In Key Stage 1 pupils could use a tape recorder and demonstrated a good understanding of the functions of the various buttons. Some pupils were able to operate the CD player in a dance lesson. Pupils used the 'mouse' carefully to find their way around a program that helped them to develop comprehension skills in their reading.
106. In the Key Stage 2 lesson, the younger pupils demonstrated good knowledge of bar charts and pie charts to show statistical information. They worked on the computer using data that had previously been input to compare their own school information with that of another primary school. The pupils were very observant at identifying the axis information. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrated secure knowledge of spreadsheets. They knew that spreadsheets have cells and were able to identify them accurately. They were working on a formula to calculate how many hours a lady uses a washing machine. Pupils were able to input the information accurately and were pleased by the working of the formula. They understood that the formula works horizontally and adds up the total vertically. Their information was displayed as a chart.
107. Good use of ICT has been made in science by using a microscope that was connected to the computer. The internet and web sites have also been used effectively to enhance teaching and learning in various subjects, for example on a topic on teeth and healthy eating and for research on the Aztecs.
108. There is satisfactory subject leadership and co-ordination. The national curriculum guidance gives good support to teachers in their planning. Monitoring of teachers' plans takes place. An assessment system needs to be introduced to monitor pupils' progress and standards achieved. Resources for ICT are satisfactory. There are a range of CD Roms and programs to support teaching and learning in most subject areas in both key stages.

MUSIC

109. There was only opportunity to observe one lesson in Key Stage 2, taught by a student on teaching practice, an individual child being taught the violin by a visiting teacher from the LEA's Music Service and to listen to children sing in collective worship. From these limited observations it is evident that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages and that standards of attainment at the ages of 7 and 11 are broadly in line with the national expectation.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the class lesson observed, the children listened attentively to a recording of two different performances of La Volta, a short piece of music from Tudor Times. They discussed the similarities and differences in instrumentation, dynamics, tempo, mood and the treatment of melody and accompaniment.

- Pupils' mostly gave accurate responses that demonstrated their musical knowledge and understanding
111. In acts of collective worship, pupils entered the school hall quietly as they listened to a CD of music by Enya. This was a good example of music being used to create an atmosphere and positive attitude. Pupils sing hymns well in time and tune, with clear words, to an accompaniment provided by a CD, in a register that is appropriate for the pupils' voices. The school took part in The Big Sing, which provided pupils, including those with special needs with an opportunity to meet children from other schools and to make music in the Royal Theatre in Northamptonshire. A musical nativity play also gave pupils opportunities to perform to their parents and the community. Four children are loaned violins and receive tuition from the County Music Service. A brass ensemble from the County Music Service has visited the school to demonstrate their instruments and to perform. This was very successful. The pupils have the opportunity of attending a choir at a neighbouring school that is organised by the primary schools' cluster.
 112. Music makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. The music curriculum could be further developed to make a greater contribution to pupils' multi-cultural education.
 113. There is satisfactory subject leadership and the co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and areas that could be further developed. A scheme of work is in place and some monitoring of planning and performances takes place. No system for assessment in music education is yet in place.
 114. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. Resources are adequate; however, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to explore and organise sounds using a wider range of percussion instruments. Information and Communication Technology could make a greater contribution to music education through use of appropriate computer programs to assist learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' standards of attainment meet the national expectation for their age. This is the result of good teaching and the positive attitudes the pupils show which enables them to make good progress and achieve well.
116. The planning of lessons is good, with clear learning objectives being linked to interesting and challenging activities. In one outstanding dance lesson, involving children in the reception year together with pupils in Years 1 and 2, the class watched a video of their movement in a previous lesson. They listened intently to the music which accompanied the video and then worked in groups to discuss their performance, considered ways of improving it, and ultimately each group performed for the rest of the class. The pupils worked tirelessly in this lesson, with the maximum levels of interest and enthusiasm. The discussions promoted very high levels of speaking and listening skills, which were further advanced as pupils worked in time with the music during their performance. The performance of individual pupils was evaluated in group discussions. Reception children were willing (and able) to take the lead during parts of the lesson. The resulting performance was of the highest quality. In an outdoor lesson involving older pupils, in a well structured lesson, pupils' ball

- skills were promoted well. After a good warm-up routine, pupils worked in groups and followed the teacher's instructions carefully. They organised themselves with a good level of independence and clearly improved their bowling and catching skills. A good level of importance was devoted to improving pupils' techniques. Throughout the lesson pupils were managed well and the teacher offered clear instructions.
117. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils and is complemented by an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, which include residential outward bound activities for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. Additionally pupils have access to swimming instruction and almost all complete twenty-five metres by the end of their primary education. The school has no fixed apparatus in the school hall, but uses the facilities of a near-by school to ensure the appropriate delivery of the gymnastic elements of the PE curriculum. There are good links with the local community and young players from Northampton Football Club contribute to after-school training as part of the club's community service.
118. The school uses nationally produced guidelines to ensure the comprehensive delivery of the physical education curriculum and this is an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected. The quality of teaching has also improved. The subject is appropriately managed and resourced.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. Only one lesson in religious education was observed during the inspection and therefore it is not possible to reach an overall judgement on standards or teaching.
120. A scrutiny of pupils' work, however, indicates the tasks undertaken meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and in addition to studying aspects of Christianity and other world faiths, the pupils are given appropriate opportunities to deal with dilemmas, for example, if children found some money would they keep it, and exploring feelings. This was illustrated well through the theme which ran through each assembly of the inspection week, when pupils explored their feelings at different times. They compared feelings of anxiety with feelings of security. Pupils responded to the assemblies well and were readily willing speak about their own feelings. Some older pupils have written interesting articles on the subject of forgiveness. Overall, in the pupils' work there is a significant emphasis Christianity and its significant events, but the agreed syllabus provides a good base from which pupils are able to explore the understanding and beliefs of other world faiths.
121. Good links with art were established during a lesson when pupils looked critically and carefully at illuminated manuscripts. Pupils showed positive interest in the work undertaken. The teaching in this lesson was satisfactory.
122. Resources are adequate and good links are made between the work undertaken in class and the themes followed through in acts of worship. Pupils have ample opportunities to explore, examine and discuss their feelings in a wide range of situations. This adds positively to the school's very good provision for the personal development of the pupils. The subject is coordinated appropriately. Overall, the school has maintained the position outlined in the report from the last inspection.