

INSPECTION REPORT

EASTON GARFORD CHARITY AIDED SCHOOL

Easton-on-the-Hill,
Stamford

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122020

Headteacher: Mr. David Longlands

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Jean Harding
21378

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 July 2003

Inspection number: 248316

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | First |
| School category: | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 9 years |
| Gender of pupils: | mixed |
| School address: | New Road, Easton-on-the-Hill Stamford |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Miss Pauline Bradberry |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 21378 | Mrs. Jean Harding | Registered inspector | English Science History Art and design Religious education Special educational needs. | The school's results & pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led & managed Educational Inclusion. |
| 01305 | Dr. Brian Rance | Lay inspector | | How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents. |
| 27899 | Mrs. Georgie Beasley | Team inspector | Mathematics Design and technology Geography Information and communication technology Physical education Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular & other opportunities offered to pupils. |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a very small village school for boys and girls from 4 - 9 years of age. There are 59 pupils on roll, and almost all are of white ethnic origin. There are three teaching groups for five year-groups. Very few pupils have special educational needs; their difficulties are mostly moderate learning difficulties. A well below average number of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The school serves a prosperous rural area. It is situated in a small community but some pupils travel from outside the village. The school is an integral part of the village community and has the advantage of the practical and financial support of the local charitable trust. Most children have had pre-school educational experience in the adjoining play-group, and their attainment on entry to the reception class is higher than is usual. Recently a significant number of pupils have left or joined the school after the end of Year 2. The school has had difficulty attracting and retaining teachers in recent years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school gives a satisfactory quality of education to its pupils. Pupils' standards of attainment are higher than average in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, and in line with national expectations for most other subjects. Standards in religious education are higher than expected in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4 pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all subjects except for physical education, science and design and technology, where the curriculum, and sometimes the teaching, is not good enough for them to attain high enough standards. The teaching is satisfactory overall, with strengths in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is not planned well and lacks balance; this constrains pupils' achievements in some subjects in Years 3 and 4, and also in the reception class. The leadership and management are satisfactory, overall, and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and information and communication technology in Years 1-4.
- Pupils use their key skills of speaking, reading, numeracy and information technology well in other subjects.
- The teaching is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' behaviour, personal development and relationships are good.
- There is good provision for pupils' care and welfare.
- There are very good relationships with parents.

What could be improved

- Pupils' achievement in science, design and technology and physical education in Years 3 and 4
- The planning of the curriculum, including the organisation of the timetable. Some statutory requirements are not met in relation to physical education and design and technology.
- The strategic planning for the school's development
- The monitoring of performance
- The consistency in the use of the procedures for assessment, and the use of the information acquired.

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 November 1997. The governing body at that time made a half-hearted response to the findings of that inspection. The improvement in nearly six years has been satisfactory, but most of it has been fairly recent. The key issue about the planning, co-ordination and evaluation of the curriculum has been partially addressed; the necessity to improve the time allocations was ignored, and this is poor. The provision for children under five was developed in line with government guidelines, but recent staffing difficulties have slowed continued improvement. There have been a few improvements to the school development planning process, including more management time for the headteacher and a stronger input by the governing body, but the time-scale of the strategic plan is still too short. Teachers are now appraised for their performance, as is their right. Assessment has improved. There have been satisfactory improvements to some other aspects of the school, including the accommodation, homework, and play equipment. Good improvement has led to higher standards in information and communication technology. Some features are not as good as they were reported in 1997. A problem at that time was

that many governors and staff were not aware of best practice in schools in similar circumstances. The current governors and the headteacher are aware that much remains to be done and have the commitment and the capability to see things through.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| | All schools | | | similar schools ¹ | |
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2002 | |
| Reading | A | A | A | A | Top 5% nationally A* |
| Writing | A | A | A* | A | well above average A |
| Mathematics | A | A | A* | A | above average B |
| | | | | | average C |
| | | | | | below average D |
| | | | | | well below average E |

It is not possible to draw statistically valid conclusions from these grades, or to determine trends, as the numbers in each cohort are so small, but results are consistently well above average. High standards have been maintained over the last five years. Pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics was very high in the national tests for 2002. The attainment of that Year 2 cohort was assessed as being well above the national expectation in science and in speaking and listening. Nearly all the pupils in the current Year 2 attained at least the expected level for reading, writing and mathematics and many attained the higher grade. These results are high. The standards of attainment of pupils in Year 2 are above national expectations in English and information and communication technology. They are well above average in mathematics. In other National Curriculum subjects pupils are working at the expected levels. In religious education their knowledge and understanding is above that expected. No judgement can be made about overall standards in physical education as only one lesson was seen.

The achievements of pupils through Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory, overall, and they are good for mathematics and religious education. The children in the reception class make satisfactory progress, but this has been hampered by the changes in staff recently. Their achievement is satisfactory, but could be better. The progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory in most subjects, but it is unsatisfactory for science, design and technology and physical education. Standards are in line with national averages and expectations in most subjects but above average in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

Across the school there are no obvious differences in the attainment of boys and girls. More able pupils make satisfactory progress. The few pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils make good use of the key skills of learning, such as numeracy and information technology in other subjects. They use their speaking and reading skills well, but more able pupils do too little writing across the curriculum to ensure that these skills are developed to the full.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Satisfactory. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good, in the classrooms and around the school. There have been no exclusions. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with adults, although there is a tendency for some to be slightly disrespectful to staff. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. |

¹ 'Similar schools' are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment found in schools nationally.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 - 2 | Years 3 - 4 |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Quality of teaching | Satisfactory | Good | Satisfactory |

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

During the inspection almost all the lessons observed were at least satisfactory. Good teaching was seen in all groups. It is clear that the teaching in Years 1 and 2 has been consistently good over time, with some high quality work in day-to-day assessment. It is the quality of the curriculum that inhibits pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2, not the teaching. The ongoing assessment is not so much in evidence in the Year 3-4 class, and as a result, although satisfactory, learning slows. A strength in all groups is the teaching of basic skills, especially writing, numeracy and information technology. A good range of teaching methods is used, especially in Years 1-2, including good use of information and communication technology. Lessons in Years 1 - 2 usually go with a cracking pace and support staff and resources are used well. The learning of children in the reception class is constrained by their behaviour and lack of concentration, and the teaching over this year has had to take account of this. The relaxed, family atmosphere set in Years 3 - 4 is conducive to maintaining pupils' interest but does not always ensure that they make maximum effort. No definite judgement can be given about the teaching in some subjects, such as science and design and technology, as none was seen, but the lack of other evidence, suggests that pupils' learning in these subjects is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Unsatisfactory overall. It is broad, interesting and generally relevant, but unbalanced. The time available for teaching is too short and the timetable not planned well enough to make the best of the time available. Subjects are included that are not required, and some things missed out because there is insufficient time. The curriculum for reception children is unsatisfactory, as it does not plan well for all activities. There are few extra-curricular activities. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Satisfactory. Pupils are identified and given help, but their individual education plans are rather general and they are not always used to plan appropriate work in all lessons. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Satisfactory. Many good things are going on, but they are often unplanned. More could be done to promote pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | There is a family atmosphere in which pupils are known well and mostly given very good care. The school is racially harmonious. Assessment in some subjects, including English and mathematics, is at least satisfactory but in others it is not, and assessment information is not used well in subjects other than English, mathematics and I.C.T. |

The school does not meet the statutory requirement for the teaching of all aspects of physical education and design and technology. The time given to French eats into an already short week and is insufficient to develop pupils' skills in a modern language. The time taken to go swimming takes an enormous chunk out of the teaching time. There is no policy for restraint, and this does not comply with statutory requirements. There are satisfactory links with parents who make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. Relationships with parents are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Satisfactory overall, but with some significant weaknesses. The headteacher has set an ethos of care and striving for high attainment but the management systems are not good enough to expedite these. There is not a whole-school approach to planning. The headteacher's load is heavy, and although the other permanent teacher provides good support, he also has a lot to do. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory and improving, although some statutory requirements are not met. Previously governors did not plan well enough for improvement and this has led to some identified deficiencies. Currently governors are highly influential in what is done; they know what is needed and have set out to bring about improvements. Priorities are appropriate but not all necessary actions have been planned. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Unsatisfactory. National tests are analysed well but there is little checking of teaching. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. Being so small more money is spent than most schools, but it is generally well targeted to raise standards in English, mathematics and I.C.T. Governors are starting to use the principles of best value properly. The large cash reserve is to cope with falling rolls next year. |

The staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, although there have been problems over the recruitment of teachers that has reduced the effectiveness of the provision for the reception children (There is a new teacher for next term). The headteacher has established clear educational direction and knows what is needed to improve the school, but he does not have enough time for his management responsibilities. The headteacher and the other teacher have had too little management training to make the best use of their limited time.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <p>That their children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are expected to work hard and do their best; are making good progress; behave well; like school. <p>That the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is well led and managed, and all parents are comfortable about approaching staff; helps pupils to become mature and responsible; provides good teaching has high expectations provides the right amount of homework is small, has a supportive family atmosphere and works well with parents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some parents think that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities. <p>A small minority of parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> would like more information about their child's progress; think that reading could be better in Year 4. |

Parents have a very high regard for the school, and there were far fewer criticisms than there are for most schools. Inspectors generally agree with parents but judge that several aspects, including the management, are not as good as parents assume. Due to the less than rigorous management, the teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, and progress is satisfactory. There are few extra-curricular activities and this reflects the size of the school and the fact that there are only two permanent teachers. Although information is satisfactory, the staff could give parents more details about their child's curriculum and progress. The reading of a few more able pupils could be better in Year 4.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment of pupils through the school, and their progress in learning is, generally, the same as was reported at the previous inspection, with minor differences. The school has made satisfactory improvements to the results and achievements of its pupils. However, the key issues concerning curriculum and assessment were not addressed as well as they should have been, and this means that standards in some subjects have not risen as much as they might have done.
2. The overall attainment of children on entry to the reception class is above the level expected for most children. The numbers are very small and a significant number of children are very able, but also some have problems, and so judgements about overall grades in assessment have to be taken judiciously. Currently, almost all children are likely to attain the learning goals for young children by the time they join Year 1 and many are working securely within the programmes of study for pupils in Key Stage 1 (that is Years 1 and 2). However, this year, the children in the reception class have not made good enough progress in their personal, social and emotional development, which is currently not at the level expected for children of the same age. This is due to the many changes of teacher during the year, so that the usual routines and structures have not been established.
3. The school's records of tracking and assessments in English and mathematics show that, over the last five years, pupils have made at least satisfactory progress in their learning from when they leave the reception class. Pupils' progress in learning is better in the class for Years 1 and 2 than in the class for older pupils. Most pupils make the progress of which they are capable, but the attainment of more able pupils in Years 3 and 4 has been compromised by the deficits in the curriculum in some subjects.
4. Currently, by the end of Year 2, standards of attainment for pupils' English, including speaking, listening, reading and writing are above the national average, and in mathematics they are well above it. Standards of spelling are good. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above that expected. Standards in science are average and in design and technology, art and design, physical education, history and geography are as expected. Little music was seen but pupils' performance and their singing suggest that attainment in the subject is in line with national expectations. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is above that expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus.
5. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, for the four years between 1999 and 2002, show a fluctuating picture, depending on the abilities of the pupils in the group, but overall standards are much higher than average. Last year (Summer 2002) pupils' grades were well above average for reading and very high for writing and for mathematics. In comparison with schools that admit pupils from similar backgrounds², results compare very favourably. From the teachers' assessments the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in science was very high. The assessed levels of attainment in speaking and listening were also above expectations. Care must be taken when considering these statistics, as the numbers of pupils taking the tests were so small. There are no national comparative results yet available for this year (2003), but Easton Garford's results are likely to be high, with nearly all pupils attaining the expected level and half attaining the higher level in reading and mathematics, and a significant number in writing. All pupils who have been at the school for this year were assessed as attaining the required level in science, and several were graded higher.
6. A significant number of pupils leave and join the school after Year 2 and so comparing groups over time is difficult. Currently, by the end of Year 4, pupils are attaining above average levels in English and mathematics. The analysis of the assessment data since they were in reception shows good progress in reading, writing and mathematics until Year 2 and satisfactory progress in these

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment found in schools nationally.

subjects from Year 2 to Year 4. Other inspection data confirms this. No lessons were seen in science, and there is little in pupils' books or in the teacher's files to determine pupils' attainment, but indications are that it is average for some aspects, but below for others, such as investigations; it is average overall. However, achievement in science has been unsatisfactory, as pupils do not make the progress that they could through Years 3 and 4; there is no evidence of higher levels of attainment by more able pupils. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations in information and communication technology. It is in line with national expectations in art and design, geography and history. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. No firm judgements can be given about music as few lessons were seen and only a little singing heard, but as pupils do so little music it is hard to see how standards of attainment, although probably satisfactory, can be as high as they could be. Attainment is below expectations in design and technology, and pupils' progress in learning in this subject has been unsatisfactory. No definite judgement can be given about standards in physical education, as so little was seen, but as pupils do not do enough dance and gymnastics, their attainment must be lower than expected, even though pupils swim well. It is because of this deficit in the curriculum that pupils' achievements in science, design and technology and physical education are unsatisfactory.

7. Evidence gathered during the inspection show that pupils are acquiring good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. They use them effectively in other subjects, although the lack of opportunities for extended writing is holding back the attainment of some more able pupils in this aspect of English. Pupils have good communication skills, but a few do not always listen as well as they might. Pupils' key skills of learning, especially their ability to work with others are often good, due to their high self-esteem, which has been nurtured successfully by the school.
8. Pupils are considered individually when assessing their progress. The progress in learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties the progress towards the targets set for them is good. There is a significant number of pupils who are more able and a few who are gifted. Pupils of higher ability are sufficiently challenged in English and mathematics, but in non-core subjects they are not working at high enough levels in the National Curriculum programmes of study, because they are not always given work that is appropriate to their needs. No judgement can be given about progress in French as none was seen and there is little to provide evidence of pupils' attainment. Parents feel that the school's emphasis on English and mathematics is appropriate and they are pleased with their children's progress; but inspectors judge that pupils' achievements could be better in some subjects.
9. The school sets appropriate targets for overall improvement in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests. Sound targets are also set for the percentage of pupils to reach the higher level. This year's pupils in Year 2 attained their targets for the national tests and teacher assessment, which shows good target setting. The headteacher has analysed performance data from the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 for the last four years and checked progress over time. His analysis is not always accurate and so the slowing down of the good progress has not been picked up. Suitable targets have also been set for pupils to attain the expected grade and a higher grade in the optional tests in English and mathematics at the end of Year 4, and pupils generally achieve them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. They behave well, and their personal development and relationships are good. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes to learning depend on the interest of the lessons. Levels of concentration are generally good when pupils are involved in a practical task. For example, all pupils were fully involved in the traffic survey. The speed with which they had to tally each type of vehicle that passed by meant they all remained attentive throughout. Adults made careful checks to ensure that all pupils were coping with the task and this meant that pupils with special educational needs were totally included in the activity. In other lessons however, concentration wanes and there is a lot of going to the toilet, which is often symptomatic of the lack of interest

and involvement pupils have in learning. Many pupils listen well and make good contributions to discussions in class; they are engrossed in what they are doing and keen to do well. However, others are happy to sit back and let others do the work and listening is not as concentrated as it could be. Work is almost always finished on time, but the amount varies depending on the expectations of the teacher.

11. Behaviour is good and parents appreciate this. It is better at playtimes, when pupils are in a less structured environment, than it is in many lessons, and that's quite unusual. When they are given the freedom to control their own actions they do so sensibly. However, behaviour in the reception class in more formal lessons is unsatisfactory. This is partly because of the disruption caused by the different teachers they have had during the year, and routines and expectations are not made clear as a result. Although the children have a suitable understanding of what rules they should follow in the classroom in order to behave well, they do not always follow these. They become easily distracted when the learning is not presented in an appropriately practical way.
12. Personal development and relationships are good. Older pupils behave in a mature manner. This is because of the caring atmosphere in school, which does much to raise pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils use their initiative when planning their own learning, for example when drawing a different mode of transport in art and design, or entering information into the computer. They respond well to the humour in lessons and this helps them to feel secure in the positive learning environment created. They get along very well together at playtimes, sharing the equipment they bring in to play with amicably. Pupils treat each other in the same polite way that they are treated themselves by all the staff who work in the school, showing a suitable respect for the feelings of others. Older pupils remind others politely but firmly of the need to listen to the person who is talking and to not interrupt.
13. Overall, pupils' attendance at school is satisfactory. It is not as good as at the time of the previous inspection and is now in line with national averages. The number of unauthorised absences continues to be very low. However, a significant proportion of pupils is absent for family holidays taken during term time, and thus the level of authorised absence is close to the national average.
14. The difficulties mentioned in the previous report about punctuality have been overcome. Some parents and children continue to come to school early and spend time together in the classroom, and this continues to be part of the school's open door policy. When the teacher is ready to call the register the parents depart promptly so that the day gets off to a good start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The teaching is satisfactory, overall, and this would appear to be the same as was reported at the previous inspection. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed during this inspection, compared with four in 1997, but a much smaller percentage of lessons seen were good or very good. Care must be taken when considering statistics, as the numbers of lessons seen is so small. However, the teaching is not as good quality compared with schools nationally, and this is one reason why pupils' learning and achievements are only satisfactory, rather than good.
16. Parents think that teaching is good, because of the high test results in reading, writing and mathematics. The headteacher states that teaching is mostly good, but there is little evidence for this assertion. He knows that the teaching for the reception children, and for science and design and technology for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is not as he would wish. Recent staffing problems have depressed the overall quality of teaching, although the temporary reception teacher is doing her best to improve the situation for these children. The teaching in reception is satisfactory, but has not been so in the recent past. The teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory. The headteacher has a four-day teaching commitment himself, and this is a lot for him to keep up with the work necessary to provide appropriately for pupils of all abilities in two year-groups. He was very unwell for the period of the inspection; this probably affected his performance. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. It is much more rigorous, and based on good day-to-day assessment. The

achievements of pupils in non-core subjects, in Years 1 and 2, are constrained by the curriculum, rather than the teaching.

17. Currently, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. When learning is planned through practical tasks the children are fully involved and learning is good. In one lesson seen which was too formal, the children lost interest, their behaviour deteriorated and learning was unsatisfactory as a result. Good behaviour management and the use of practical resources help to settle the children to learning and keep their attention focused on the task in hand. It doesn't help that once the children are settled their learning is interrupted by groups of pupils from another class coming into the classroom to work with support assistants; children's attention is distracted and it makes it hard for the teacher to regain their concentration. The lack of an overall curriculum plan does not give enough guidance to lesson planning, and this has been particularly crucial this year with the constant changes in teachers. The current teacher has made a good start in making sure that the learning matches the needs of the individual children in the class, and has made as good an attempt as she can under the circumstances.
18. In the other two classes there are many strengths in the teaching, including good teaching of basic skills and giving pupils lots of practice in basic skills and in finding things out for themselves. As a result pupils acquire and consolidate new skills, knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. The use of information and communication technology is particularly good, with a very good range of resources and work supplied that uses these resources properly; information technology resources are not just a 'bolt on' to lessons, but genuine tools for learning.
19. There are clear differences in the teaching of subjects, not due to lack of professional knowledge and understanding, but to the organisation of the teaching and degree of detail in the preparation of lessons. The teaching of mathematics is good, throughout the school. The teaching of English and religious education is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teaching of aspects of physical education, such as swimming, is good, but no overall judgement can be given about the teaching of this subject, as so little was observed. Little was observed in geography, music and art and design, and none in history, but indications are that the teaching in these subjects is satisfactory. The teaching for most other subjects is satisfactory, but it is unsatisfactory for science and design and technology for pupils in Years 3 and 4. There are several reasons for this, not least the recent staffing difficulties. Also, too little is done due to the restricted curriculum and at times the teacher does not stick to the agreed programmes of study. Insufficient differentiated work is prepared for pupils of different abilities; more able pupils suffer most from this. Work is not marked for science and pupils get away with too little work and thought. The teaching of science is disorganised and is based on an unsatisfactory curriculum. It does not stretch the imaginations of pupils and does not promote analytical thinking. This is known to the governors, and the improvement of the teaching of science is a current priority for the school; better arrangements are in place for next term.
20. The management of pupils is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The relaxed approach and good use of humour encourages pupils' interest in Years 3 and 4, and makes them want to please their teacher. However, it does not always promote great effort and there is a tendency for pupils to be slightly disrespectful, and this is unsatisfactory. The same good humour is apparent in Years 1 and 2, but it is combined with a 'no nonsense' approach that encourages pupils to get on with the work, to concentrate and become independent.
21. The pace of lessons is generally satisfactory, and often good in Years 1 and 2. At times the pace slows, partly because time allocation is too long, and the work expands to fit the time available. An example is an art lesson in Years 3 and 4. This dilatory pace does not encourage pupils to do as much work as they can. The slow pace of lessons is constraining pupils' output in writing, and this means that their overall progress in this aspect of English, although satisfactory, is not as good as it could be.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with sufficient help to enable them to make satisfactory progress. The classroom support staff have much to do with this progress, and they are well briefed by teachers. However, the planning of many lessons does not take their special

educational needs into account, and opportunities are missed to address the targets in their individual education plans. As, mostly, pupils all do the same work, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Extra work is sometimes given, but this is not in sufficient depth fully to extend their thinking and skills; this is a weakness.

23. A good range of teaching methods is employed, especially in the class for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Staff use role-play and practical activities to ensure understanding, and much discussion is done, especially in Years 3 and 4. To some extent this is the root of the problem; pupils are given the facts, and the ensuing discussion promotes their understanding, but little is recorded – there is too little time for writing, and the staff do not record what has been done, and how well. Homework is generally satisfactory. It is used well in Years 1 and 2 but is inconsistent in Years 3 and 4, as some parents have pointed out. It is the inconsistency in the quality of teaching between subjects and between classes that is a major issue for the school to address, but this cannot be done without tighter monitoring and management.

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

24. There has been too little improvement to the organisation and management of the curriculum since the previous inspection and it remains unsatisfactory overall. Statutory requirements are not met because aspects of physical education and design and technology are not taught in Years 3 and 4. This is despite the school's aim to include all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education in the timetable. Many planned activities are interesting and set within relevant contexts for the pupils, and this helps them to develop key skills including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology well. However, the balance across the year and week, and within several subjects, is still unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Despite being flagged up in the previous inspection, the length of the school week is still less than the recommended minimum teaching time for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Planning is better in the Year 1 and 2 class, and the curriculum is satisfactory overall for these pupils.
25. The balance of the curriculum in physical education is poor. This is because the amount of time taken up by swimming leaves too little time for other aspects of the subject. As a result, pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not do enough gymnastics and hardly any dance during the year. This is not good enough as they have a full entitlement to these aspects of physical education.
26. There are now suitable policies and schemes of work for all subjects and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, they are not always followed consistently in all classes and do not always take into account the higher levels of learning required for pupils who are more able. Not all pupils take part in all planned activities and this means they do not get their statutory entitlement in some subjects and their development of skills suffers as a result. This was evident in design and technology, particularly in Years 3 and 4. There are other subjects where there is either too much or too little content owing to an insufficiently rigorous overview of what is happening across the school by subject co-ordinators. There is no whole school approach to planning. Because the school organises the teaching of some subjects into blocks of time, there is sometimes too big a gap between the teaching in some subjects and consequently the pupils fall back in their skills development. Pupils do very little music, and the good input from the music specialist is not followed up in other lessons by other staff.
27. The planning of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage, for children in the reception class, is unsatisfactory. The curriculum plan now relates to the statutory areas of learning and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. However there is no detailed curriculum plan to guide staff on what should be covered and when. Due to the staffing difficulties it was particularly important this year to have a detailed plan to guide provision. The lack of this, and the considerable staff disruption, has resulted in inconsistent provision for the children this year. The temporary teacher has made a good start in redressing the gaps in learning and skills which appeared as a result, but this is too little and too late to make a difference to this group of children. Despite her best efforts, there are resulting weaknesses in achievement in their personal, social and emotional development.

28. The planning for the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The school follows the guidance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this ensures that planning is detailed and usually matched well to different ability groups in classes. The use of numeracy skills are planned particularly well in other subjects and this helps to consolidate skills and puts learning into a relevant and interesting context. In geography older pupils collect a range of information confidently; they put this independently into a computer-graphing program to present the information clearly and in a way that can be interpreted. Similar activities are planned in history, reflecting the well-planned cross-curricular links between some subjects. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to talk about their work in lessons and to research information from books in the library and, under supervision, the internet.
29. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities given the size of the school and the number of permanent staff. The recent difficulties of finding full time replacement teachers have meant that other members of staff have had too much to do. Despite this, the football and cricket clubs have continued and several extra activities, visits and visitors have added interest to the curriculum, for example coaches from local sporting clubs to support physical education, and artists-in-residence for art and design. The pupils recall the recent visit to Duxford museum in some detail and this reflects how exciting they found the visit to be.
30. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Issues are discussed openly in circle time, when pupils sit together and talk about feelings, relationships and friendships. This makes a suitable contribution to their awareness of issues relating to growing up. Although taught, there is no planned programme for raising awareness of drugs abuse and the safe use of medicines, but there are plans to introduce this into the scheme of work when it is written formally.
31. The provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. Knowing their pupils so well, the staff ensure that no pupil slips through the net. Appropriate individual education plans are devised, but these could be more detailed, and certainly the targets could be addressed better in subjects other than English and mathematics.
32. The schools' links with the community and partner institutions are satisfactory. The school is clearly seen as being at the heart of the local community, and, through the efforts of the PTFA, hosts a number of village events throughout the year; an autumn carnival, tea afternoons, bingo and quizzes. The older children have joined in a 'litter pick' around the village, visited local places of interest such as the recycling centre and all pupils have attended productions at nearby theatres. The pupils have enjoyed visits to the school by a professional ballerina, football coaches, a physical education instructor and the fire brigade, and these have helped their personal development.
33. The school has very close links with the pre-school play-group which uses one of the other buildings on the school site. Throughout the year these play-group children come into 'big school' to see what it is like so that their joining the school in September is as easy as possible. The school is a member of the East Northampton cluster group of schools, which organises a wide range of liaison activities and training for staff from all the member schools, including Oundle and Kings Cliffe Middle School to which most pupils transfer after Year 4. Transfer to the middle school follows close liaison between the schools and Year 4 pupils have an appropriate trial day at the middle school towards the end of the summer term.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains satisfactory. The outside environment makes a particularly good contribution due to the peaceful, well kept and attractive surroundings they provide for play and other activities. Pupils are very aware of their role in caring for the recently developed Millennium garden.
35. Assemblies and religious education make a suitable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Through the study of various religions in religious education pupils are developing a sound knowledge and respect for different faiths. They compare these with their own and accept that others may have different religions but similar beliefs. Pupils' ideas are built upon well by staff and this encourages them to question how the world began. *'Who created the creator?'* was one

question that was discussed openly in one lesson and this gave pupils good opportunity to consider their place in the world. There are missed opportunities to develop pupils' spirituality in other subjects such as wondering about creatures and plants in science, expressing likes and dislikes in art and design and listening to moving music. The weekly celebration assembly makes a strong contribution to raising pupils' self esteem.

36. There is a satisfactory number of planned opportunities for pupils' social and moral development. Playtimes are social occasions and pupils are encouraged to get along together at all times. Gentle reminders of the need to say sorry when one person upsets another reflect the care with which adults treat pupils. Lunchtime staff play a prominent role in this, whether this is playing with pupils and encouraging group games, sorting out minor upsets or trying to retrieve a ball from the school roof. The ethos established when pupils eat their lunch is calm, and pupils are encouraged to engage in social chat which they do quietly. This helps to build the good relationships between pupils. Independence for caring for their own needs is actively encouraged, for example when getting their things for physical education, or when refilling drinks' bottles so that they are able to get a drink at any time they want. In lessons, pupils decide the resources they need. There are a few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for small jobs around the school, such as delivering messages or taking the registers to the office. There are no opportunities for pupils to express their views formally or for the school to gain feedback on what pupils like and dislike about the school. Although there are class rules, there are no school rules to establish accepted conduct. There are some planned opportunities for pupils to discuss issues such as bullying and relationships in personal, social and health education and literacy lessons, but these are not yet written as a formal scheme of work to ensure all members of staff follow the agreed activities.
37. Provision for raising pupils' awareness of their own and different cultures is satisfactory. In geography, younger pupils study how people from different countries lead different lives to their own and consider the different ways they celebrate birthdays and other personal events. In history, older pupils are given good opportunities to study their own local culture. Religious education provides suitable opportunity to find out about the range of faiths and cultures in today's Britain. The unit of work when pupils study how the Creation story is told in different cultures is a good example of this. However, given the mono-cultural nature of the school's population, more needs to be done to include aspects of other cultures within the planned curriculum for many subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school is a small one that provides a environment where all staff know the pupils very well so that the care that they take of the pupils is good. It is a positive strength of the school, which is greatly appreciated by parents, as it was in the previous report. It provides a good basis on which teachers can teach and pupils can learn. Good child protection procedures are in place with the headteacher undertaking the role of designated person and all members of staff are fully briefed on their responsibilities in this regard. The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are generally very good. Routines for dealing with first aid, medicines and accidents are well established with two staff trained in emergency first aid. There is an appropriate Health and Safety policy in place and formal risk assessments are carried out. Safety checks on potentially dangerous equipment take place annually, alarms are tested regularly and practice evacuations of the premises take place each term with their timings and any difficulties recorded. The procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are good; where there are occasional difficulties the school is well supported by the education welfare officer.
39. There are good induction procedures for parents and children to get to know the surroundings and adults before they start school. Parents useful information about the day-to-day routines and curriculum. Opportunities to visit the school beforehand build relationships quickly. This process is supported well by the close links with the local on-site play-group.
40. The procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. A positive behaviour policy is in place and is applied consistently by all staff

throughout the school. Pupils know and understand the behaviour that is expected of them, and also what happens when their behaviour falls below the expected standards. They enjoy celebration assemblies on Fridays, which parents can attend, when they can receive awards or certificates. Procedures for monitoring personal development are satisfactory, although informal. Staff know the pupils very well, and this is reflected in comments made by teachers in the personal and social section of annual reports.

41. The care and guidance given to pupils with special educational needs, and their parents is good, and parents feel very well supported by the staff in this respect. The assessment of pupils' special educational needs is satisfactory, but more could be done to use pupils' individual targets across the curriculum. The parents of pupils who are gifted and talented are pleased with the way that their children have been catered for, and how well they have been nurtured; but inspectors judge that more able pupils' achievements could be better in some subjects if they were taught more.
42. There has been satisfactory improvement in the procedures for assessment since the previous inspection and the school has gone some way in putting suitable procedures into place to record pupils' attainment in all subjects to measure their progress. Assessments are carried out when the pupils start school and progress towards the early learning goals is carefully recorded. Individual pupils' assessment booklets contain enough information to note what has been covered during the year and the statements are closely linked to National Curriculum levels to provide a benchmark for the pupils' attainment. While the information is used effectively to identify suitable targets for pupils in English and mathematics, progress is not yet measured closely enough during the year to note whether pupils are making enough progress towards these targets and to decide whether changes need to be made to the curriculum.
43. In many subjects, and in the Foundation Stage, the information collected is not used sufficiently well to identify what pupils need to learn next. This is because the purpose of assessment is not clear and there is no overall curriculum plan to guide the assessment criteria. The statements are too broad and general, and are not always precise enough about how well pupils have developed their skills in some subjects and aspects of subjects. For example, overall assessments in physical education indicate that pupils are attaining standards that meet the national expectation. However, while evidence for swimming and games support these statements, there are indications that pupils do not do so well in gymnastics and dance in Years 3 and 4. This is not recorded anywhere, so does not provide specific enough information for the next teacher to plan appropriate learning. This is not the case in reading and numeracy where the criteria are closely matched to the literacy and numeracy objectives, and in information and communication technology where the criteria clearly identify the skills pupils need to develop. In these three aspects the statements give specific information about pupils' attainment and helps the school identify precisely what pupils need to do next to improve. As a result, standards are higher in these subjects.
44. The agreed procedures are not followed consistently in all classes. Therefore in one class there are good procedures in place to note how well pupils are doing and the information is used effectively to identify targets and plan learning in subsequent lessons, but not in the other. The assessment co-ordinator is aware of the weaknesses. He has plans to monitor more closely the purpose of assessment and evaluate whether the information provided gives good enough support and guidance for learning.
45. The use of assessment information is good in mathematics. Careful note is made about what the pupils can and cannot do in lessons and the information is used effectively to set targets for future learning matched to the different learning needs of pupils. This means that more able pupils are provided with the challenge they need to attain high standards in mathematics and less able pupils are provided with support in lessons to help with specific skills and understanding. Pupils' answers in tests and assessments are analysed carefully to note the changes required to the curriculum and this has led to improved provision in mathematics.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. As at the time of the previous inspection, parents' views of the school are very good. In meeting parents at school, informally and at the parents meeting, and from responses to the questionnaire, there was very little criticism. Parents greatly appreciate the caring ethos of the school, the standards that pupils achieve, and the good behaviour and discipline that they learn.
47. The information provided by the school to parents is satisfactory overall. The general information provided through a series of frequent letters is satisfactory, and includes all relevant information about future events and dates for the calendar. The Prospectus and the Governors Annual Report conform to government guidelines. Parents feel able to approach the school at any time to understand how their children are progressing, and informally this happens on a daily basis, at the school gate for most parents. Formal consultation evenings are held in the autumn and spring terms. At the end of the summer term parents receive the annual reports on individual pupils. These reports are satisfactory; they describe what the pupil has done but not always what progress has been made or the standards achieved, and there is very little comment on things that are not so good or need working on. There is a commentary on personal development, but no specific targets for further improvement are provided. Parents at the meeting mentioned some disappointment in these reports, which use computer-generated standard phrases. They are justified in feeling that the report does not reflect the individuality of their child; this problem is compounded by the fact that assessment procedures in some subjects are insecure.
48. The parents of children in the reception class make a suitable contribution to their children's learning by helping them to learn the words for their next reading book at home. Parents' involvement in the life and work of the school is satisfactory. They support the pupils well in their homework assignments and, particularly in the earlier years, through reading with their children and completing reading record books. Only a small number of parents regularly assist in classrooms. There is a high level of support for any special events, including productions and sports day. A number of parents have been very supportive in undertaking practical work in the school grounds by erecting the adventure play equipment and landscaping the very attractive garden and well. The school's Parent, Teacher and Friends Association has been very successful in raising substantial sums, which have been used to improve the school's facilities and most recently have funded transport for some school trips, curtains for the hall and a contribution to the adventure play equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management are satisfactory overall, and this is the same judgement as was made at the previous inspection. The headteacher remains a purposeful leader, and has ensured consistently high standards in English and mathematics. He has negotiated his way round the minefield of heading a small, village school with determination. This is in spite of increasing demands from national initiatives, combined with great high parental aspirations for the attainment of their children in basic subjects. He has set a supportive family ethos and has steered the school through difficult times recently. Parents think that he has done a good job, and there were no criticisms of his leadership from the pre-inspection meeting with parents or in the survey of their views. He has the faith of governors, the respect of staff and the affection of his pupils.
50. The headteacher is supported well by the only other full-time teacher, who has recently been made permanent. These two have to cope with all the management responsibilities in the school, which is a very heavy load, especially when there are several issues not addressed that have been sorted out by most schools some while ago. Their management is satisfactory, in that things get done reasonably effectively, but the lack of time and more importantly, the lack of systems and structures to ensure consistency, make their task harder. Although teachers are properly appraised as part of satisfactory performance management systems, too little other monitoring and evaluation of teaching is done. The headteacher and the other teacher have coped well with the difficulties produced by rapidly changing staff, and both have the flexibility and good humour not to allow the difficulties to affect atmosphere in the school, although the provision for

reception pupils has been affected by the staffing problems. The headteacher and the other teacher have had insufficient management training to be able to prioritise and evaluate as effectively as they should, and the headteacher has too little time for his administrative and pastoral responsibilities. The time given to the headteacher for this was raised at the previous inspection, and has only been partially addressed.

51. The management of the Foundation Stage has been a problem recently, but this is due to be resolved since the appointment of another teacher for September. The plans to address the weaknesses in the Foundation Stage, noted in this report, are appropriate. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but the co-ordinator has yet to be fully trained, and this is necessary if improvements are to be made in this provision. Lip-service has been paid to the management of many subjects, and this weakness has affected the provision for pupils, and hence their attainment. Neither teacher really knows what is going on in the other class. Many good things are done, but these are not co-ordinated, and good practice in one class does not spread to the other. The informality in processes commented on in the previous inspection report has changed little. There have been improvements to the management of the curriculum, but more are needed. The lack of overall planning and management of the curriculum is key to the weaknesses of the school.
52. The governing body is more effective in fulfilling its responsibilities than it used to be. After the previous inspection the governing body dragged its feet over some of the key issues for action. Governors made a policy decision **not** to act upon some of the criticisms raised in the key issue relating to the curriculum, such as keeping the excessive time for swimming, and not increasing the length of the taught week. Governors have the best interests of pupils at heart, and feel strongly that swimming should be provided for young children. However, such policy decisions in the past have not been thought through. 'Doing their own thing' has led to deficiencies in provision which have compromised pupils' rights to a broad, and balanced, appropriate education. Generally, the school ensures equal opportunities for all pupils, but the right of more able pupils to an appropriately challenging curriculum is not ensured. The high standards achieved by pupils in some subjects are not seen in other subjects due to the deficiencies in the curriculum.
53. There have been major changes in the composition of the governing body over the years, and the current governors are in a position to grasp the nettle and are determined to put right those issues noted in this report. In this they have had the benefit of sensitive and sensible advice from the headteacher. Although improvement in five and a half years has been satisfactory, many of the deficiencies noted in the current inspection are those left over from 1997, which were not addressed by governors in the past. The key issues relating to teachers' appraisal and the provision for the Foundation Stage were addressed properly, but since then different deficiencies have cropped up, such as the lack of a policy for restraint. Current governors have had satisfactory training, but they are insufficiently knowledgeable about the legal requirements. The governors' monitoring of the school's performance is satisfactory for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics but unsatisfactory in many other areas. The governors, staff and the parents have convinced themselves that many things are wonderful, because they did not have the knowledge of what is happening in other schools, nor the appropriate evaluation procedures to monitor effectiveness. The policy decision to strive for recognition as an Investor in People is a good move, as it will concentrate governors' minds on the training necessary to address the current areas for improvement, and bring appropriate help to construct a viable school development plan. The current chair of governors is well involved in the practicalities of running the school and has an appropriate overview of what is needed in the near future. She acknowledges that things have not been done as well as they might in the past, and knows the need to convince parents that changes are necessary.
54. Strategic planning was an issue in the last report. It still is. The time-scales are too short to cope effectively with a situation of financial uncertainty brought on by falling rolls. The large carry forward accrued has, to some extent, been prudently planned to cope with this. Financial planning is good and the control of the budget by the efficient secretary is very good. However, there are excessive funds in reserves that should be spent on current pupils, especially as the school has identified that resources for science are not good enough. Resources for learning are

satisfactory overall; for information and communication technology they are good. Sound use is made of the resources, and good use of computers. The lack of reference books noted in 1997 has, to some extent, been remedied by the acquisition of CD-Roms as well as books.

55. Being a very small school, without economies of scale, more money is spent on each pupil than in most schools. This money spent gives satisfactory value, considering how much has to be done, and what has been done. Governors use the principles of best value when planning the budget, especially in comparing prices and results. They do not, however, ensure that sufficient challenge is given to all decision-making, such as in providing a small amount of French, and this is a weakness. Grants are used well, but the inefficiencies in the use of staff and the accommodation, noted by inspectors in 1997, to some extent still remain. The inefficiency in the use of teaching time remains a big issue.
56. The planning for long-term improvement is still not good enough. The School Improvement Plan is for one year only and, although the previous plan is properly reviewed, further development of the curriculum is constrained by such a short time-scale. It is good that development-planning concentrates on the raising of standards, but generally these are attainments in core subjects, with other curricular areas being very much a second-tier. Current targets are appropriate, but rather limited in that they do not address issues of standards in many subjects. The school has found it difficult to plan for longer than a year because of the uncertainty over staffing. These issues have now been resolved, and the teaching staff is more settled. There are now sufficient, appropriately qualified staff to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum. A specialist is bought in to teach music to all pupils, but her time is limited and so pupils do not do enough music to ensure their high achievement. A visiting specialist teaches French, but this is inefficient, as the subject is not required for pupils of this age, and is not taught enough for pupils' learning to be meaningful. There are generous numbers of support staff. An appropriate induction and mentoring system is being devised ready for the new teacher. The real deficiency is in management training, and the headteacher knows this.
57. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall, and governors have made satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection. The classrooms are adequate to deliver the curriculum, but the present sharing arrangements can be disturbing. For example, the practice of pupils in Year 2 working at tables with a classroom assistant alongside reception children is especially disruptive for teaching those in reception. The governors have improved the outside areas. The grounds are extensive for play during dry weather, with some attractive garden features and quiet seating areas. There is also an adequate hard play area with a separate outdoor play area for the reception children, and this promotes their physical development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to speed up the rate of improvement, the governors, headteacher and staff must now:
1. Improve pupils' achievements in science, design and technology and physical education in Years 3 and 4 by:
 - improving the schemes of work;
 - ensuring that all the programmes of study are covered in design and technology and physical education;
 - giving them more regular emphasis within the timetable;
 - devising and using appropriate assessment procedures;
 - preparing more challenging work for more able pupils;
 - for science and design and technology, improving the teaching and acquiring further resources.*
- (paragraph number: 93)

2. Improve the planning of the curriculum by:
 - planning the timetable more efficiently so that all subjects have sufficient time for teaching;
 - increasing the time available for teaching over the school week;
 - reviewing the arrangements for swimming, so that the travelling and teaching take up less time*;
 - reconsidering the time taken for teaching French*;
 - planning more effectively for the needs of more able pupils in all subjects;
 - improving the planning of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage*;
 - appointing a member of staff to co-ordinate the overall planning and monitoring of the curriculum;
 - planning more effectively for pupils' multi-cultural development;
 - giving training to the curriculum co-ordinators in the monitoring of curriculum planning.

(paragraph numbers: 1, 3, 6, 8, 16, 17, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 51, 52, 60, 73, 74, 83, 86, 87, 93, 95, 103, 104, 106, 108, 115, 116, 117)

3. Improve the strategic planning for the school's development by:
 - taking a longer-term view;
 - properly prioritising the targets for each year;
 - devising appropriate systems and structures so that progress towards targets can be measured;
 - involving the governors more actively in devising the School Improvement Plan*.

(paragraph numbers: 54, 55)

4. Improve the monitoring of the school's performance by:
 - giving staff training in the methods of evaluating lessons*;
 - setting targets that are easier to track and ensuring that governors keep an eye on the progress;
 - providing the headteacher more time for management and lesson observation;
 - more effective questioning of what is done.

(paragraph numbers: 23, 44, 50, 51, 53, 56, 92, 96, 106, 115, 122)

5. Improve the assessment in non-core subjects by:
 - devising sound procedures to assess pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in non-core subjects;
 - using this information to plan work that is at a suitable level for pupils to make progress in their learning;
 - making pupils' individual education plans more specific so that their progress is measurable.

(paragraph numbers: 41, 42, 43, 44, 68, 86, 92, 96, 101, 106, 115, 118)

In addition to these main issues, the governing body should ensure that the statutory requirement to have a policy for the safe restraint of pupils is met.

Note

A number of the other aspects of these key issues for action were also known to the school, and are being addressed. These are marked*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 20 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 45 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 0 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 0 | 5 | 15 | 75 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y4 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | | 59 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | | 2 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y4 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 3 |

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

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 3 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 4 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.5 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.3 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2002 | - | - | 10 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | - | - | - |
| | Girls | - | - | - |
| | Total | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 100 (93) | 100 (93) | 100 (93) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | - | - | - |
| | Girls | - | - | - |
| | Total | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 100 (93) | 100 (86) | 100 (86) |
| | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89) | 89 (80) |

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

The separate totals for boys and girls have been omitted as the numbers are so small, and all attained level 2 and above.

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

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| White – British | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| White – Irish | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 3.33 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 18 |
| Average class size | 20 |

Education support staff: YR – Y4

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 72 |

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 | 2002/03 |
|----------------|---------|

| | |
|--|--------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 201400 |
| Total expenditure | 205550 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3484 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 32350 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 28200 |

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 | 3.24 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1.2 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 48 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 26 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 85 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 85 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 85 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 50 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 81 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 73 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 88 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 73 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 88 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 85 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 27 | 50 | 19 | 0 | 4 |

Other issues raised by parents

- The fair but firm headteacher ensures the goodwill of parents.
- The approachability of staff.
- Improvements in children's work and happiness since moving from other schools.
- The challenge for more able pupils – one parent felt the school is excellent.

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

59. The children start school, part-time to begin with, in the September following their fourth birthday. Most children attend full-time after the first half term by agreement between home and school. There are good relationships between the school and playgroup provider, and most children are therefore well prepared for school. The number of children who start each year is small, only eight this year, and therefore attainment on entry can vary from year to year. Overall attainment on entry is above that found nationally. This is because, although most children have levels of attainment that are as expected in most areas of learning, there are rarely any children with below expected levels of attainment. Some children are more able and start school with good skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils' standards on entry to Year 1 are higher than expected, due to the satisfactory teaching.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is currently satisfactory in the reception class. This is because the temporary teacher has put into place an interim curriculum plan, which generally meets the needs of the children this term. Satisfactory relationships have been established and, for most of the time, the children respond well. Most activities are relevant and give the children suitable opportunities to choose their own task. This makes a good contribution to their imaginative play. However, because there is not enough planned structure to the tasks, the play sometimes lacks purpose. Due to the lack of an overall curriculum plan, tasks are at times too formal and this leads to unsatisfactory behaviour. Although there are more opportunities for the children to learn through play, and sand, water, role-play and construction activities are now included in the weekly routines, these still have too little structure and do not clearly identify what the children are intended to learn. Planning outlines what the children will do rather than what and how they will learn and is cobbled together with the same planning as that for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This is not acceptable and does not give sufficient guidance to teachers who take over the class at short notice. The plan she inherited from the previous teacher has not helped the current reception class teacher.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. There has been unsatisfactory progress in the children's personal, social and emotional development and, despite starting school with satisfactory skills, many children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Many children are not clear about expected levels of behaviour due to the number of teachers they have had with different expectations and routines during the year. Despite recent satisfactory teaching, they have not made the progress they should over the year, especially in their levels of independence and levels of concentration. They have made suitable progress in their self-help skills and due to the clear expectations in this aspect, they all find their own things for physical education and get changed independently. They have good levels of self esteem and self-confidence due to the caring ethos created in the school. There is good prospect of greater stability in the teaching of the reception class next year, and so these problems with behaviour are likely to be overcome.

Communication, language and literacy

62. The teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing is satisfactory. As a result, all children make satisfactory progress in their communication, language and literacy skills to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Many exceed these and so standards are above expectations. The children enjoy talking about their work and share what they have done with adults and each other. There are missed opportunities for the children to do this formally in some lessons as the teacher tends to do the talking for them when reviewing work at the end of lessons. The children are developing good reading habits. They read their reading books with confidence and are recognising a suitable number of words on sight because of the word cards they take home to learn. However, they have few other strategies despite knowing all the letter names and sounds. This is because reading focuses too much on hearing the children read rather than teaching them how to read for themselves. There are now good opportunities for the children to write independently in role-play activities and on the occasions when writing tables are organised

for free access during play activities. There is still too much emphasis in adult-led lessons on the children getting their spellings correct and this slows down learning and the development of writing skills.

Mathematical development

63. The children make satisfactory gains in their mathematical development to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Many children exceed these. When the children start school many can count to ten and beyond. They have a good knowledge and understanding of shape and measures. Lessons are structured around the National Numeracy Strategy and this means learning objectives are clear and build sufficiently on this previous learning. The children add and subtract confidently and apply this knowledge to solving simple problems involving money. When challenged and taught in suitable play based practical activities, they show a good understanding of the relationships between numbers. This is due to recent good teaching in this aspect. However, activities are sometimes too formal and the children lose interest in the task and learning slows as a result. Completing worksheets is not always suitable for young children who want to be involved in a more practical way. At the ends of lessons, the children are encouraged to talk about how they reached a particular answer and this makes them think about what they are doing and why.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory and nearly all children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Recent work indicates a good knowledge of plants and small creatures in the local environment. The children use computers confidently to play games, moving the mouse with good control to locate and select pictures, words and numbers on screen. They are slow to find letters on the keyboard, however, when writing. The children particularly like the practical play activities and they become fully engrossed in the tasks planned in this way. When making a model of a piece of play equipment for the Three Bears to use, they all produced a range of good quality models. The opportunity to select which equipment they would use and the way they would join the materials made a good contribution to developing their independence. A robot has become a taxi this term to take the Three Bears to town. Because this simple task is particularly well structured to encourage learning through play, the children are fully engrossed. They learn how to put in instructions to make the toy move along a designated pathway as a result.

Physical development

65. There has been sound improvement in the teaching of physical development since the previous inspection and this is now satisfactory overall. The children make satisfactory progress and most attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Activities are mostly developed through formal physical education lessons and there are still too few opportunities for children to take part in balancing, climbing, running, jumping and other physical skills' activities when they are given opportunities to choose what to take part in themselves. Pencil control is good due to the large number of formal handwriting activities in which the children take part. The children use scissors confidently to cut out, although this is not always as accurate as it could be. Work on display indicates that the children are often given a pre-cut shape to join rather than being expected to cut these out for themselves.

Creative development

66. Creative development is now taught through a suitable range of practical play-based activities and is satisfactory overall. These are supplemented by music lessons which are satisfactory overall but not always appropriate for children of this age. Consequently the children are not involved as much as they should be in music-making activities and exploring the sounds different instruments make. In these formal lessons, many become restless and their behaviour deteriorates as a result. Imaginative play is developed well. This is due to the wider range of role-play opportunities in designated areas such as the Three Bears cottage, and in the sand and water. The school does not yet identify precise learning objectives for these areas for each half term to enhance the provision further. By the end of the reception year, nearly all children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

67. Pupils' standards of attainment are above average by the end of Years 2 and 4 and this is the same as reported at the previous inspection. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. More able pupils achieve better at the end of Year 2 than they did in 1997. Progress in learning slows during Years 3 and 4 and there is still some under-achievement, in that pupils could do more writing in other subjects so that they are doing as well as they could. The boys at this school do better than boys nationally, especially in reading. They like to read, and to discuss books.
68. The national test results for Year 2 in 2002 and 2003 show that pupils' standards of reading and writing are high. Results for writing last year were very high in comparison with schools nationally. The good results reflect the emphasis on English within Years 1 and 2, and pupils of all abilities make good progress in their learning. Pupils use their reading skills well in other subjects. Their writing skills are used well at times, but opportunities are missed for pupils to write at length in other subjects and this is a weakness. Assessment at the end of Year 4 shows that pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, but not as good progress as is made in Years 1 and 2; because the planning is not as good, and more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, especially in reading.
69. Pupils' standards of speaking and listening are above those expected, especially speaking. Pupils have a wide vocabulary, and love to converse about technical subjects as well as social chat. Their learning is promoted well by the wide-ranging discussions in class, although this sometimes goes on too long. Pupils' mature conversational style, encouraged by the staff, does much to promote thinking in discussions in subjects such as religious education. Pupils generally listen well to each other, but at times they are so keen to put their own point of view that they interrupt the teacher as well as other pupils. When really interested in the lesson, they listen very well and ask good questions.
70. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in reading, but this could be better for more able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and work out words well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read well, but lack the more advanced comprehension skills. They can work out words from sounds well, but higher-level skills such as inference and deduction are not as secure. A few more able pupils are thrown when they do not know a word; they are so used to having a very wide reading vocabulary that they do not often have to use alternative strategies when they meet an unfamiliar word. Many pupils are not as good at working out sounds made up of several letters, as they should be. They have a secure grasp of the technical vocabulary of reading such 'homophones' and 'simile', but do not have such advanced reference skills. More able pupils sometimes read books that are too easy. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are heard to read rather than actively being taught higher-level reading skills. Work done in literacy lessons is not continued in other lessons. The art of skimming and scanning is not that well developed. Pupils do, however, read well with expression, and some with dramatic effect, and this reflects the way that staff tell stories.
71. Many pupils told inspectors that they do not use the library very much, and there is little reference to library time in the planning. There is a small library and a satisfactory stock of books. Reference work is supplemented by computer-based reference, and this is appropriate. There is a sound range of books to resource teaching in the Literacy Hour. Pupils' library skills are satisfactory, but more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 should be able to make better use of this valuable resource. Pupils of all abilities rarely read poetry by choice, but enjoy it at school. Many enjoy the well-known children's authors, such as Jacqueline Wilson, but few were as keen on 'Harry Potter' as many pupils of the same age. Most parents help with their child's reading at home, and this is developing the pupils' skills and love of literature.
72. The standard of writing is above average in Years 1 and 2, and above for some aspects of writing in Years 3 and 4. Throughout Years 1 to 4 spelling is better than average, due to the emphasis put on this by the school. Handwriting is at least as expected, with most pupils forming their letters correctly and developing a neat script. Punctuation is generally accurate, but less able pupils in Years 3 and 4 are still confused over speech marks and apostrophes. Pupils write in a wide range of genres, and much of it is good, including a very good range of adjectives used by

pupils of all abilities. The interesting teaching and good relationships within the classes, encourage pupils to be adventurous in their thinking. But the really super writing, using this imaginative vocabulary, is not often seen in written work. The learning of writing is better than their reading because there is more emphasis on structured teaching. Writing is a current priority for improvement within the local education authority and the school, and good progress is being made in raising pupils' achievement, especially in Years 1 and 2.

73. The teaching is satisfactory overall and leads to sound learning across the school. There is no evidence of unsatisfactory teaching, which there was at the previous inspection. The pace of lessons is a bit slow at times, as the work expands to fill the time available, and this is a curriculum issue. There is sound teaching of basic skills. The teaching is better in Years 1 and 2. The classroom assistants are a valuable resource in helping pupils during the literacy sessions, especially those pupils with special educational needs. Parents also play a good part in working with small groups of pupils.
74. Staff plan well for pupils to use the computers to help their learning in English. As a result, the subject does much to promote pupils' information and communication technology skills. The interactive white boards are used well during the group literacy sessions, and this helps pupils to concentrate. There is satisfactory use of the subject to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff and pupils have good discussions of issues of current concern, and issues of gender, such as in 'Bill's New Frock'. There is some use of literature from other cultures and traditions, but more could be made of this to improve pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy English lessons and most try hard. They are given too little time to practise an extended piece of writing, and this is hindering their learning to concentrate on one piece of work for a good length of time.
75. The National Literacy Strategy is used as a scheme of work and some appropriate drama is built into the teaching, but more could be done. A great deal of time is devoted to English, and parents are very happy about this. It would appear to be paying off in the maintaining of standards, but better planning of the timetable would ensure an appropriate time for English skills, and more time to do extended writing in other subjects. At present pupils write too little and this is holding back the attainment on the more able pupils. Speaking and listening are taught, but in an ad hoc way. Homework is used appropriately; it is consistent, and followed up well, in the Year 1 and 2 class, but is less consistent in Years 3 and 4. Parents have pointed this out, and they are right to request more consistency and more challenge for their more able children.
76. There is satisfactory assessment of reading and writing, and standardised tests are used well to set targets for individual pupils. Reading records are kept, and these show what pupils have read, but not what they need to do to improve. The leadership and management are now satisfactory, but have not been so until recently. The other teacher has recently taken over the co-ordination of English, and knows well what needs to be done. He has not had a chance to monitor the teaching, but keeps an eye on standards through analysis of the national test results. There is no formal action plan to develop literacy, but the co-ordinator has good ideas about what needs to be tackled to make the teaching and learning more consistent between the two classes.

MATHEMATICS

77. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are now well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 4. This is because of more precise planning of what pupils will learn in lessons, better teaching and learning methods, and more precise assessments of pupils' attainment, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 1 and 2.
78. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 rise to the challenges with which they are presented in lessons. The brisk no nonsense approach keeps them concentrating hard throughout. The quick fire questions make them listen carefully for the next problem and pupils are keen to find the answer before the time limit. Assessment information has been used to sort pupils into appropriate groups, and the teacher moves from one group to another with different questions which match the particular

needs of that group. Resources are used very effectively to help pupils get to the answer quickly and help them to gain a greater understanding of the way number systems are organised. This helps them develop a good understanding of the relationships between numbers and inverse operations. More able mathematicians are getting a good deal in this atmosphere of challenge. Lesson planning is detailed and identifies precise learning objectives for the range of abilities in the class. Learning support assistants work closely with individuals or groups who need additional help and this means pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well in lessons.

79. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make satisfactory gains in their learning. Many pupils joined the school since Year 2 and therefore it is not possible to compare year-groups. However, tracking of individuals indicates that progress is satisfactory. They work confidently with numbers and have a good understanding of place value of whole numbers. Knowledge and understanding of fractions is less secure, but because of the positive atmosphere in the classroom to learning, pupils are happy to have a go even if they get things wrong when being presented with new work. This led to nearly all pupils understanding the equivalence of some fractions in the one lesson observed, and more able pupils how tenths and decimals relate.
80. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2. The interactive whiteboard is used effectively to present learning to pupils. Because they can all see, they are all involved in the mental start to lessons. The pictures displayed on screen help them gain a deeper understanding of the pattern and relationships between numbers and the way the numbers are organised. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 saw the pattern produced by the nine times-table and this helped them internalise the answers to particular sums. Similar work has been done with other tables and this, along with learning at home, means that pupils know the tables they should and more able pupils all of them. Marking is variable. When it is good it details exactly what pupils can do and this helps to identify what they need to learn next. Too often, it does not do this well enough, especially in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and tasks are sometimes too easy or too hard. Teaching then focuses too much on enabling pupils to complete the work on worksheets correctly rather than working on the associated skills. 'Pair and share' time encourages pupils to talk about what they think and this helps them to consider why they have reached a particular answer or how they might go about solving a particular problem before they start work.
81. There is good use of numeracy skills in other subjects and this helps pupils to put their learning into real contexts. Geography makes a particularly strong contribution to numeracy with the collection of information about the local area in surveys and the measurement of weather statistics. This information is often put into a computer-graphing package, and this presents the information more clearly and helps pupils interpret what it shows. Information and communication technology makes a strong contribution to the subject. Working with Roamer to write instructions to make it move from one place to another, and writing procedures for drawing shapes, provide good opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of angles and mathematical language.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Assessments are carried out regularly and the information provided is used well to monitor how much progress pupils have made. The school is not yet monitoring work during the year closely enough to ask whether pupils are making enough progress. Answers in tests are analysed carefully and the information is used effectively to identify suitable individual targets for pupils when they move to the next class. This is used to organise the pupils into suitable ability groups, and to provide additional support through programmes of study such as Springboard, or one-to-one adult support in lessons. There are weaknesses in the monitoring of lessons and as yet the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to watch lessons in all classes to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning directly.

SCIENCE

83. Due to the timetabling, only one lesson was observed, for the class for Year 1 and 2 pupils. No science is currently timetabled for Years 3 and 4. This is the problem. All evidence points to the fact that pupils' standard of attainment in Years 1 and 2 is at least in line with national expectations, and shows elements of learning at higher levels. However, standards for pupils at the end of Year 4 are not as high as they should be, especially considering the high ability of the pupils and what they knew at the end of Year 2. This is a decline in pupils' achievements since the previous inspection, and is because pupils have not been taught enough. There has been insufficient improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.
84. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 did well in last year's National Curriculum teachers' assessments but not many attained the higher grade. Current pupils in Year 2 attained at least the required grade this year, with three getting the higher grade, due to the improved curriculum and teaching. Work in their books, and evidence from the discussion with pupils and in the one lesson seen, suggests that pupils attain at expected levels. What they do know they are sure of, but they have had a fragmented curriculum and so their knowledge and understanding is not secure in all aspects of the programme of study and more able pupils are not achieving as well as they should, because the curriculum does not develop early science concepts in a progressive way. Pupils know about electricity at an appropriate level and can talk about healthy foods and lifestyle. They have a hazy grasp of the properties of materials and remember making shadows and why they come about. There is some evidence in their books and in the records of investigative work, which should form the bulk of the science curriculum for pupils of this age, that pupils use scientific vocabulary, and know how to record findings accurately. Pupils in Year 1 can tell about wind forces and suggest sensible reasons why their boats move or not. Pupils in Year 2 know about life-processes at an appropriate level, but sometimes the curriculum range is too wide, and so although they learn interesting things, these aspects are not required in the National Curriculum programmes of study.
85. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have covered far too little. The science curriculum is not planned well enough; the times allocated are low, and the schemes of work are not tight enough to ensure detailed planning. The school has adopted a mixture of the government guidelines and a commercial scheme; this does not work because there is insufficient planning and monitoring to ensure a progressive development of skills. At times the teaching does not adhere to the agreed planning, or the National Curriculum programmes of study. The teacher's assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills is not always accurate. Pupils' individual records show that they are attaining at least at appropriate levels and for some pupils, higher than expectations. There is little evidence for this assessment of attainment, either in pupils' books, or in the school. No teaching was seen, but the lack of evidence of work and accurate assessment is the evidence of pupils' lack of learning. Pupils of all abilities nearly always do the same work. The work is scrappy, decorated unnecessarily, which wastes time, and is unmarked, and this strongly suggests unsatisfactory teaching.
86. In discussion pupils remember very little of what has been taught. Clearly they have had much class discussion and they have concerned views about the environment. They know about basic life processes, and they talk sensibly about changes in materials and the use of different materials. They can explain physical phenomena at an appropriate level. They know about how experiments should be conducted but cannot tell what they did, and why, with any precision. But as pupils have had too little emphasis on scientific enquiry, their skills, knowledge and understanding of this programme of study are below those expected especially for more able pupils; this was the case at the previous inspection. Too little use is made of pupils' good numeracy or information technology skills, although there is some sound work in the construction of data-bases. As there is no proper assessment, the co-ordinator does not know what the pupils don't know. The teacher of pupils in Years 3 and 4 records where he thinks pupils have got to, based on what he thinks he has taught them; this is poor practice.
87. The management of the subject is poor. The headteacher and governors are aware that the planning and teaching of science are unsatisfactory for Years 3 and 4. The improvement in the teaching of science and the acquisition of further resources is a current priority for the school and

there are appropriate, firm plans to improve the curriculum and delivery of the subject. At present science makes little contribution to older pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and more able pupils are insufficiently challenged.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Only one lesson was seen and so an overall judgement on teaching cannot be made. However, the evidence of previous work shows that pupils' learning is satisfactory and their standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in both classes. This is the same as was reported at the previous inspection. There is a rather dated policy for the subject, and government guidelines are mostly used to provide a suitable scheme of work. Information and communication technology is appropriately included in the teaching, so that pupils use their skills well.
89. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, but work in their classroom is of good quality. It shows imagination and is well presented to celebrate pupils' achievements. The rich variety of work, and a good range of media suggest teaching that is based on sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and creative use of ideas. Pupils' work in the style of Picasso is especially good, and, as long as they produced these themselves, without over-direction from staff, this would suggest that pupils have good skills and a sense of colour.
90. One lesson was observed in Years 3 and 4. This was linked to a local art competition. The teaching was satisfactory, although for a practical lesson over 30 minutes talk by the teacher is too long. However, there was good use of stimulus pictures in a wide range of styles. Pupils enjoyed the work and tried hard. Their drawing skills using charcoal and chalk are at the level expected for 8 or 9 year-olds. However, pupils lack a wide artistic vocabulary and this inhibits their evaluation skills.
91. The good display noted by the previous inspectors continues. There is a good range of work around the school. This is mounted well and named, but not dated or evaluated, neither is it interactive, which is a missed opportunity to extend pupils' learning. Pupils have produced art-work in several media, but there is little evidence of work in 3-D and textiles, although pupils say that this is carried out. Good use is made of information and communication technology, to research artists and to produce imaginative creations, such as in the style of Kandinsky. Some elegant work based on Islamic patterns is on display. There is very little in the way of stimulus material to promote pupils' interest and curiosity, and resources are a bit thin, as they have not been recently audited.
92. There is satisfactory management of the subject provided by the new co-ordinator, who keeps an eye on what is going on, but more analytical monitoring of teaching is now needed. Assessment of pupils' skills, especially their knowledge and understanding of the work of other artists and designers, is not well developed. Older pupils do not have portfolios or sketchbooks, and no individual work was supplied for scrutiny. There is no moderated school portfolio. Assessment is, therefore, unsatisfactory. Art and design lessons are planned with good cross-curricular links in mind and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Very good use was made of an artist-in-residence to produce wood sculpture, based on the local colony of Red Kites. Pupils love to discuss this exciting creation in the entrance hall. This project was very productive in that it had a good link to science and promoted local knowledge very well. Further appropriate projects such as this are planned.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection and provision for design and technology is now unsatisfactory. Although there is a new scheme of work, which, if followed, provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, it is evident from talking to pupils that it is not followed in all classes. Very little work is kept and this makes it difficult for the co-ordinator to track provision and standards. No teaching and learning have been seen and

therefore the fact that pupils do not do design and technology when it is identified on the timetable to take place, has not been picked up. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4.

94. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are in line with national expectations. This is as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils now make sufficiently detailed plans to help them with their making tasks. For example, the hand puppets pupils designed and made were planned carefully to make sure they were big enough to fit on the hands. The detail was added and the designs were carefully labelled to identify the materials and tools the pupils needed and wanted to use. This gave them some independence and ownership of their own learning. Evaluation is built into learning and this makes sure pupils adapt and improve the items being made as they go along and note whether they would go about things differently if they made the items again. The curriculum is followed diligently and pupils receive a broad curriculum as a result. Achievements for pupils of all abilities in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory.
95. No overall judgement was made about the quality of teaching as no lessons were seen and there was very little work to analyse. However, the fact that pupils do not do as much as they should indicates that learning is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Pupils are given too much freedom to decide for themselves whether they will or will not take part in lessons. Therefore some finish off poems or do other tasks instead of doing design and technology. As a result only half the class have evaluated, designed and made sandwiches this term, and pupils do not recall constructing models from wood and other construction materials, despite its inclusion in the scheme of work. Pupils are looking forward to designing and making their moneyboxes over the next two weeks.
96. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because the co-ordinator does not check on whether the subject is being taught. Assessment information is not used sufficiently well to monitor progress or the lack of it and therefore weaknesses in learning have not been picked up. No evidence was seen to show that information and communication technology is being used to support learning in the subject. The headteacher is aware of the deficiencies in the delivery of the subject, and in standards, and has already made appropriate plans to remedy these.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Standards in geography are in line with expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory across the school.
98. The curriculum is broad and focuses on finding out about the local area in both classes. This is giving pupils a good insight to their own local culture and gives learning purpose. The study of different places means that pupils have a secure understanding of physical and human features. Younger pupils talk confidently about their route to school and older pupils how to get from one country to another. Consideration of caring for the environment makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. Practically based activities ensure pupils develop and use skills and not just knowledge of geographical facts.
99. Information and communication technology is used effectively to record information pupils have collected in their visits in the local environment. The recent traffic survey was one such example. Pupils use the internet to research for information about other countries and find out about different climates around the world. As a result pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the range of climates found and the likelihood of having rain in desert regions.
100. No overall judgement was made about the quality of teaching and learning because only one lesson was seen. This was good because of the practical task, which engaged the pupils' interests and helped them draw conclusions about the impact of traffic to the local area. Pupils cover a range of work and the new scheme of work details exactly what pupils will learn. Learning is varied and this captures the pupils' attention. They therefore remember acceptable amounts of information about their studies, because they have secure understanding. Discussion about what

they are doing and have found out is built into lessons, ensuring that pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary when they talk about their work.

101. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Assessments are carried out every half term and the statements are linked to National Curriculum levels. These assessments provide suitable amount of detail to complete the reports for parents at the end of the year. The information is not yet used well enough to identify any improvements that need to be made to curriculum planning to challenge more able pupils. Therefore although there are more able pupils in all classes, the assessment information does not reflect higher than expected attainment in the subject.

HISTORY

102. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection. That report stated that pupils' standards of attainment were in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4. The limited evidence available suggests that this is still the case. In 1997 pupils' progress was said to be satisfactory and more able pupils were capable of more; this is also still the case.
103. No lessons were observed as history was not on the timetable for the period of the inspection, and there is limited other evidence. Discussions with pupils show that they are interested in the subject and have satisfactory knowledge and understanding, but insufficiently well developed skills, especially of historical interpretation. The problem is that not enough history is taught in a structured way in order to promote pupils' full understanding of the similarities and differences between periods of history. It is this imbalance of the curriculum that is affecting pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 2 know what history is about, and can relate changes to their own lives. They know how we find out what has gone on in the past. They vaguely remember learning about old and new toys and houses, and really enjoyed the work on The Great Fire of London, and Florence Nightingale. They know the implications of her work. They are animated when talking about how they used computers to look up the sources of information.
104. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have not studied the units they are supposed to have covered in sufficient depth. This has constrained the achievements of all pupils and means that more able pupils have not been sufficiently challenged. Pupils enjoy history but generally their knowledge and understanding is fragmented. They do, however, discuss local history well. They make satisfactory reference to source material and know that history is open to many interpretations. They display real empathy with evacuees during the Second World War, and with a fighter pilot. Their understanding of chronology is satisfactory, as far as it goes, but, as they have not learned about any period of history from the Vikings to the Second World War, there are big gaps in their knowledge. They possess an appropriate historical vocabulary and make sound use of information and communication technology for research.
105. No judgement can be given about the teaching of history as none was seen, but it is clear that pupils' learning has been unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. There is evidence that, when it is taught, much good work is done. The policy is good; there are good cross-curricular links and a real emphasis on equal opportunities, which ensures that the subject has some input into pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' use their information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy skills well in history. For example, they made graphs of people's employment in Easton-on-the-Hill several years ago, and researched this on the internet.
106. The reason why some pupils' achievements are not as good as they could be is the thin curriculum. The study units selected by the school for Years 3 – 4, (in consultation with the receiving middle school, to ensure that all the programmes of study for Years 3 to 6 are met), should take a minimum of 35 hours a year, with many schools doing nearly 45 hours. There is no evidence that Easton Garford pupils have done anything like this amount of work. The less than rigorous assessment means that the deficiencies in more able pupils' achievements have not been picked up, and this is due to unsatisfactory subject management.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Provision has improved since the previous inspection and this has led to higher standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Standards are now above expectations and pupils' achievement in the subject is good.
108. Pupils are confident users of information and communication technology and are quick to talk about its benefits to their work. Younger pupils change the font size and style independently when writing titles for their work and use the mouse confidently to explore and combine colours in artwork. Their above average skills in resizing pictures and changing the background colour of shapes are reflected in their realistic pictures of night time. The stars scattered around are all different sizes and light glows from the yellow windows inserted onto a black background. Older pupils confidently put information into a computer and make independent decisions whether to present their information as a graph or pie chart. They base their decisions on how clearly the information needs to be presented. Work is moved around the screen to evaluate the best presentation layout before printing work for display purposes.
109. The quality of teaching and learning are good. Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and this makes sure that questions are focused on what pupils have done and helps them to think things through for themselves about what they need to do next to improve their learning. For example, in one lesson, when pupils in Years 1 and 2 were writing routes to get Roamer from the school to various points in the village on a plan, they adjusted their instructions accordingly to make sure they arrived at the designated place the second time of trying. This activity encouraged pupils to work in pairs and this ensured that they talked about what they were doing and negotiated the final instructions to be put into Roamer. Unfortunately afternoon play interrupted the learning and time was lost packing away and getting reorganised again afterwards; this is a timetabling issue.
110. Adults use the whiteboards to grab the pupils' attention and the big screen enables them all to see what is happening. Pupils therefore concentrate well during the introductions of lessons and when new learning is presented in this exciting way. They are involved in moving things around the screen and this keeps them on task. This was particularly beneficial to a group of less able pupils who were learning, in a numeracy lesson, how the number system was organised. The hundred-square could be seen by all and pupils were all intrigued when the number they were asked to identify lit up when selected. This moved learning and understanding forward at a faster rate because pupils concentrated so well.
111. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The curriculum is good because it supports learning in a range of subjects and activities are relevant and interesting. This means pupils are learning to use computers as tools for learning by the time they leave the school. There is a good range of good quality computers, which support learning well. The software is easy to use and this helps pupils do what they want independently. Programmable toys help younger pupils gain a good understanding of directional language and angles and therefore older pupils find the transfer of this knowledge to writing procedures on screen to draw a range of mathematical shapes much easier as a result. Assessments are linked to skills therefore provides good information about how well pupils can or cannot complete certain tasks.

MUSIC

112. The previous inspection found that pupils' standards of attainment were in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. At this inspection few lessons were observed, but evidence from these and from hearing singing in assembly suggests that current pupils' attainment is at the level expected. The singing is not as good as was reported in 1997. However, at the previous inspection there were deficits in pupils' composing skills, which have now been rectified. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced some careful compositions using graphic and traditional notation. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

113. Each group of pupils is taught music for about 40 minutes each week by a visiting specialist. The teaching seen was satisfactory. As so little was seen no judgement can be made for teaching overall, but indications are that pupils' learning is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know some technical terms, such as ostinato, and use them correctly. They enjoy the music lessons and sing quietly and sweetly. Due to the teacher's good class management pupils listen well, and individual pupils are encouraged to be confident and sing solo. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 play a range of tuned percussion instruments with care. They keep strictly to the pulse of the music they have written. In the lesson observed pupils were keen and organised themselves well to practise their compositions. Many pupils recognise the music playing as they go into the hall for assembly, and a few comment on how it made them feel.
114. A few pupils learn the recorder with the specialist teacher. Their playing is of a satisfactory standard. A few have peripatetic violin lessons, but these were not seen. There is no choir or orchestra, but the school does put on a large-scale production each Christmas, which parents enjoy. There is a focus on British music, and on the classical composers, and the subject makes some contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. More could be done, and opportunities are missed to use the subject in other lessons. There is a good range of instruments available, but that they are underused.
115. Very little time is devoted to music especially in Years 3 and 4, and this is not enough to learn all that is required by the time pupils leave the school. The satisfactory scheme of work for the aspects of performance and composition, is the visiting music specialists' own. The other aspects of music, such as appraisal, are not taught enough by the class teachers. Music is not on the curriculum plan and there is not a planned system for ensuring that pupils acquire all the skills, knowledge and understanding. Progression and continuity of learning are not assured, especially as the visiting teacher does not do the pupils' assessments, and the class teachers write the pupils' reports to parents. The management of the subject is not secure enough to ensure that all pupils achieve at an appropriate level in all required aspects of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. There has been too little improvement in provision for physical education since the previous inspection and it is unsatisfactory overall. This is because pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not do enough gymnastics and dance during these two years. The school took the decision to keep swimming on the curriculum and, despite criticism in the previous report that this took up too much curriculum time, it is only recently that it has investigated ways to reduce this. There are now appropriate plans due to be implemented during next term to redress some of the imbalance. Currently, as so much time is taken for swimming little other physical education activity takes place; this is not good enough. Pupils have a right learn to gymnastics and dance on a regular basis and it is evident from talking to pupils in Years 3 and 4 that these aspects of physical education do not take place any where near often enough. Consequently, despite higher than average standards in swimming, overall achievement is unsatisfactory for these pupils in physical education.
117. No overall judgement was made about the quality of teaching in physical education, as too little was seen. The one lesson seen in Years 1 and 2 was good and indicates that standards are at least in line with national expectations in the pupils' games skills. Despite the good teaching seen, learning is only satisfactory, because as only one physical education lesson per week takes place, this is not enough to ensure pupils' attainment in all aspects of the subject. Gymnastics, dance and games are not included in the curriculum policy and scheme of work, but class planning indicates that there is suitable provision for gymnastics and dance for pupils in the class for Years 1 and 2. Whole-school planning for the subject is weak, and physical education makes insufficient contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
118. There are good links with local sporting clubs and this makes a good contribution to provision in games skills, particularly football and cricket. Assessment information is not used well enough to plan learning because the statements are too general and not related to skills. The assessment criteria are not sharp enough to allow staff to identify potential weaknesses in dance, gymnastics

and games skills. Because significant weaknesses remain, improvement and leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. From the few lessons observed, the analysis of work and discussion with pupils it is clear that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have more advanced knowledge of the facts of the aspects they have studied, and how religion shapes people's lives, than is expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. The teaching seen for these pupils was satisfactory. But, over time, good, thorough teaching has ensured good learning for these younger pupils. Only one lesson was seen for pupils in Years 3 and 4, but their work shows that they have covered the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of religion, and how people learn from religion. This situation is better than was reported at the previous inspection, when the attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 matched expectations,
120. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know many of the basic practices of the Christian and Jewish faiths. They compare aspects of Judaism, such as the Seder meal, with their own experience. Pupils discuss well the special food used in celebrations and know about Shabbat and the Passover, and why this is celebrated. More able pupils can tell the significance of special foods. They were interested in the story of a Jewish celebration, read well by the teacher, and listened carefully. A good range of strategies is used to ensure pupils' concentration and secure learning.
121. No judgement can be given about the teaching of pupils in Years 3 – 4, as only one lesson was seen, but evidence in pupils' books shows at least satisfactory learning. Pupils have covered aspects of Christianity, Islam, Judaism and a little Sikhism. Their knowledge of the facts is secure. The 'school-based' unit of work on The Creation has really interested pupils, and many can relate different versions of the story as told in different cultures. The way the subject is presented does much to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The lesson seen was satisfactory, with the story being told well, so that pupils were gripped. Pupils of all abilities were encouraged to take part, and the interactive white board was used well. Pupils' learning in this lesson was constrained by them not listening well to each other during discussions. The presentation of pupils' written work is often untidy which prevents them getting as much from the subject as they could.
122. The headteacher oversees religious education and has ensured that standards are as they should be. There is on-going assessment but as pupils mostly do the same writing, it is hard to see how differential judgements can be made. Pupils speak about discussions in their religious education lessons, but there are no records of these, and this is a weakness. The improvements to religious education have been a priority for the school, and this was appropriate, as improvements have been made to standards and teaching.