

INSPECTION REPORT

MENDLESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mendlesham

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124599

Headteacher: Mrs C. Catchpole

Reporting inspector: Peter Sudworth
2700

Dates of inspection: March 3rd to 6th, 2003

Inspection number: 248603

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary (First)
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Stowmarket, Suffolk
Postcode:	IP14 5RT
Telephone number:	01449 766224
Fax number:	01449 766224
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. R. Fenning
Date of previous inspection:	November, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2700	Peter Sudworth	Registered inspector	English Science Information and communication technology Art and design Music Religious education Foundation stage Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9056	Val Cain	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
30717	Gordon Tompsett	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services Limited
Strathblane House
Ashfield Rd
Cheadle

SK8 1YG

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mendlesham First School is situated in the heart of the village and benefits from the use of some shared community facilities. Pupils attend from the parishes of Mendlesham, Mendlesham Green and Brockford west of the A140. In addition twenty per cent of the pupils come from out of catchment. It is a smaller than average primary school and educates boys and girls from age four to nine years. It has 77 pupils on roll, including five part-time reception pupils. Twelve pupils have special educational needs. Three of these pupils have statements. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is around the national average. Children begin the reception class part-time in the term before that in which they will become five, except autumn born children who spend one afternoon each week in the school from June. Attainment on entry is slightly above average but with a wide range of ability. Most pupils are of white British background but there is a very small number of pupils from other ethnic groups. The school does not have any pupils with English as an additional language. There are four classes including the reception class. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are educated in one class for much of the time, though there are cross-school arrangements for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Five pupils are entitled to free school meals; this proportion is below the national average. There is little movement in and out of the school during the year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Mendlesham Primary School is a good school with some very good features. It has made substantial progress since the last inspection. It is very well led by the teaching head and there is a very clear sense of purpose and direction. The teaching is good with significant amounts very good. It achieves standards that are at least as good as they should be, except in religious education in Years 3 and 4, and better in some aspects of work. Curriculum planning is thorough for most subjects and has some outstanding features. The school maintains very good records of pupils' on-going progress. There is a very strong community spirit and parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school's efforts. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainments in science, mathematics, reading, speaking and listening, knowledge of grammar throughout the school, and in physical education in Years 1 and 2;
- The overall good quality of teaching, including significant amounts of very good teaching;
- The very good leadership of the headteacher and the commitment of all the staff and governors;
- The breadth and very good planning of the curriculum throughout the school;
- The very thorough-record keeping systems and their use in planning pupils' next stages of learning;
- The effectiveness of the school's links with its parents, the community and the pre-school group;
- The care all the staff take of the pupils, their relationships with them and their concern for each individual, all of which are reflected well in pupils' very good attitudes to one another;
- The very good provision for pupils' moral, social, cultural development and the good provision for their spiritual development.

What could be improved

- Attainment in religious education in Years 3 and 4 and the learning resources in this subject;
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their good grammatical knowledge in story writing, and greater consistency in the quality of handwriting and presentation.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in 1997. Pupils' attainments have risen in reading, mathematics, science, design and technology throughout the school, and in geography and religious education in Years 1 and 2. Their attainments in art and religious education are not as high in Years 3 and 4. The provision for more able pupils has improved and they are challenged well in lessons. Some pupils could still take greater care with their handwriting and presentation, although these have

improved in the main. The quality of teaching has improved and there is much more good and very good teaching. The quality of provision and of teaching for pupils with special educational needs has improved and individual education plans have much clearer targets. Very significant improvement has taken place in the planning of the curriculum, except in religious education and much of this is now of high quality and is now informed by schemes work in all subjects. Assessment is also better. The school development plan is more rigorous and financial planning is better. The governing body is more organised. The staff have better opportunities for training. The school provides better value for money, and has good potential to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	A	A	A
Writing	A	B	A*	A
Mathematics	A	A	B	C

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Children in the reception class make good progress in most areas of their development and very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, despite many having part-time education during much of the year. They reach the expectations for the end of the reception year and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development. Their speaking and listening skills are good. In the end of Year 2 national tests, results have been above average in recent years. In 2002, the school met its own targets and was in the top five per cent of schools in the country for the proportions of pupils who reached the expected level. By the end of Years 2 and 4, pupils' current attainment is above average and pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, spelling and reading, in their knowledge of grammar and in mathematics and science. Their imaginative writing skills are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers make good progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' attainment in most other subjects meets expectations and they achieve soundly. Pupils meet the locally agreed expectations in religious education by the end of Year 2, but their attainment is below expectations by the end of Year 4 and progress is unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They enjoy their lessons and take a keen interest in all that is provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, pupils' behaviour in class, around the school and when outside is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are very good between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to develop initiative and personal responsibility.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Good

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

All members of the teaching staff have very good relationships with the pupils and show a very calm approach. They manage pupils well and explain tasks clearly. The constant encouragement they give the pupils sets a very good tone for learning. Pupils respond well as a result, show interest and enjoy their work. Science, English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, are taught effectively and lessons are well sequenced so that pupils' can build up their knowledge and skills with a good understanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in both literacy and numeracy, and also in other subjects, which are equally well planned, except for religious education, which is not of the same good standard. Teachers research the content of lessons well. The planning of almost all lessons is very thorough and links to a broader whole-school planning structure with very good links between subjects. Teachers match the work well to different abilities within the class in all subjects so that the pupils are challenged effectively. Teaching is particularly effective in Years 1 and 2 and in the reception class. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported. Teachers' record-keeping systems are very thorough. They make very good use of these to plan the next stages of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good across the school, except in religious education in Years 3 and 4, which could be planned better and made more interesting. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Teaching assistants and volunteers give much extra help to these pupils. The individual education plans are of a very good quality.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' personal development is very good overall. Pupils show respect for others and show initiative. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. It is good for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good and a strength of the school. The teachers know the pupils well and the level of care is high. Teachers keep very careful records of pupils' on-going progress and plan work to meet the next steps in their learning.

The school works very well with its parents, the vast majority of whom hold the school in high regard.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led by the headteacher and the staff work very well together as a team. Subject co-ordinators carry out their several responsibilities very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors take a keen interest in the school and a few work regularly in school as volunteers. The governor for special educational needs takes a particular interest in those who have learning difficulties.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Progress towards the targets on the school development plan is monitored regularly. The school analyses the results of tests well and takes action on the results.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The finance is monitored well on a day-to-day basis and at regular intervals by the governors. The staff are deployed effectively with due regard to their expertise. Learning resources are used to good effect in lessons.

The school is well staffed. Accommodation is good in the main, though one classroom is very restricted in size. The school benefits well from the sharing of community provision. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school seeks best value when making purchases.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, are making good progress and work hard; • Behaviour is good and the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible; • The teaching is good; • The school works closely with parents and they find it easy to approach the school with any queries; • The school is well led and managed; • The school expects the children to work hard and do their best. 	<p>A very small number of parents state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of homework; • They are kept well informed about their children's progress; • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views expressed by parents. The team finds that parents are well informed about their children's' progress. There are periodic opportunities to meet the teachers formally. The open door policy enables parents to discuss their child's progress by appointment. Written reports are of good quality. Amounts of homework are appropriate given the pupils' ages. The range of extra-curricular activities is good and some of these take place at dinner times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils commence the foundation stage with slightly above average attainment. Many only attend part time for much of their reception year because of the age of admission. In the reception year, they make good progress and very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and reach the expectations for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative and physical development. They exceed expectations in their personal, social and emotional development. A newly arrived traveller child was making good progress in this aspect and quickly settled to the well-established routines. In other aspects of learning, a few reach an above expected level. The children achieve well. They share toys and other learning equipment, dress and undress themselves, self-register on arrival and quickly adapt to the class routines. They use their initiative in play, select activities independently and concentrate on them. They make good progress in communication, language and literacy. Their speaking and listening skills are good; most speak fluently and in extended sentences. They know several letter sounds. Some have made a start to reading. All recognise their names and write them with correct use of upper and lower case.
2. Most reach the expected level in mathematics and make good progress. They recognise numbers to ten and some beyond. Many count to 20 and some back to zero on their own. They add one more but find one less more difficult. They recognise some two-dimensional shapes and one or two three-dimensional shapes. They acquire the language of comparison appropriately for their age. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and learn about different festivals and customs in the world. They learn through role-play activities as they undertake activities in the clinic and at the travel agent's. They look at objects through coloured acetate and describe the change of colour. They make good progress in their physical development as they pedal their wheeled toys with great enthusiasm and dexterity, slide along benches, go swimming, bounce balls and catch them. They use paste spreaders and scissors with good skills. They make pictures in different ways, mix their own paint, spray paint and print and make good progress in their creative development. They listen attentively to music.
3. The school has performed well in national tests in recent years. It has succeeded in getting almost all pupils to the level expected for their age and a significant minority above. In 2002 all Year 2 pupils reached the expected level. As a result, the school was in the top five per cent of schools in the country for the proportions of pupils who reached the expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and teacher assessed results in science. The percentages of pupils reaching the higher level were well above average in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics. It met its own target for pupils' attainment at the end of the academic year. The school also did well against similar schools. It was in the top five per cent of schools in the country for the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level. The school's boys have trailed the girls in reading on average over the past three years and the gap is slightly more than the national difference, although both boys and girls do much better than boys and girls nationally. No significant reason could be found for this. In writing over recent years, boys and girls have outperformed their national counterparts. The school's boys excel in mathematics. They have been doing much better than the

girls, although girls have been significantly outperforming girls nationally. The school received an achievement award in 2000 for its improved test results.

4. In Years 1 to 4, pupils' levels of attainment have improved in English since the last inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 4, pupils' current attainment is above average in speaking and listening, spelling and reading and in their knowledge of grammar. They achieve well in most aspects of English and soundly in writing stories. Spelling is often accurate and pupils make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds and letter strings to spell correctly. Their imaginative writing skills are satisfactory. They do not yet have enough opportunities to write creatively and at length. They perform well in instructional writing. They punctuate their work well for their age throughout the school and already show correct use of full stops and capital letters in Years 1 and 2. Handwriting is variable but of a satisfactory level overall, although several pupils could write with greater attention to the relative size of letters and take greater care. Paragraphing is well established for several pupils by the end of Year 4. Pupils' reading skills are above average in the main. They read with good attention to the punctuation marks and most read accurately. Pupils show a much greater enthusiasm for their self-chosen library books than they do for their scheme books. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English and also in other aspects of their work because of the good support they receive from their teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers. This, too, is an improvement since the last inspection. Higher attaining pupils achieve well throughout the school in most aspects of English but could achieve more highly in their imaginative writing. They achieve well in mathematics and science and soundly in other subjects.
5. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and reach an above average level by the end of Years 2 and 4. This represents an improvement since the last inspection in the investigational aspect of mathematics and in using and applying mathematics by the end of Year 2. By this stage also, many pupils understand mathematical examples that contain three figures and they can add and subtract such examples. They are beginning to explain the stages of their thinking for tackling mathematical problems based on real-life situations. Year 4 pupils round up and down to the nearest ten or 100. Most know their multiplication tables and they have a good appreciation of the position of the digits in four-figure numbers and beyond.
6. Pupils' attainment in science by ages 7 and 9 is above average for their age. Most pupils are well on course to reach the expected level and a significant minority above in the end of Year 2 assessments. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Year 2 pupils begin to understand the concept of a fair test. They know that some materials are magnetic and others non-magnetic and they know that some objects contain both magnetic and non-magnetic material and group objects accordingly. They know that some things change their state when heated and that some foods are healthy and others are not. By the end of Year 4, pupils know about solids and liquids. They classify vertebrates and invertebrates in their studies of life and living processes. They show a very good general knowledge and interest in science and raise interesting questions.
7. Attainment in art and design throughout the school meets expectations and pupils make sound progress. This is not as high as at the time of the last inspection in Year 4. However, a significant strength is the pupils' exposure to a variety of art forms and their engagement in a wide range of experiences. These include a good focus on appreciating different artists, which widens their all-round knowledge. Pupils make satisfactory overall progress in design and technology but good progress in the use of tools. Pupils' attainment in the subject is in line with expectations by the end of Years 2 and 4 and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils'

attainment in information and communication technology, history, music, physical education and geography by the end of Years 2 and 4 is in line with expectations and pupils make sound progress. Their achievements are sound in these subjects. As with design and technology, this represents an improvement in geography since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory at the end of Year 2.

8. Whilst pupils meet the locally agreed expectations in religious education by the end of Year 2, attainments by the end of Year 4 are unsatisfactory. Pupils have not remembered what they have been taught and their knowledge of important facts about the Christian faith is insecure. They do not make enough progress in this subject. This represents a reversal of the situation at the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2 and satisfactory by Year 4.
9. A significant improvement since the last inspection is the good challenge now offered to the more capable pupils throughout the school. These pupils now make good progress as a result, particularly in English and mathematics. It was often too low at the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils enjoy school, display much interest in their work and show very good levels of enthusiasm in their activities. Parents state that their children are helped to become mature and responsible and this was evident during the inspection. Pupils interviewed praised the friendly staff and said how much they enjoy the activities available. Attendance and punctuality are very good. The judgements relating to pupils' attitudes and behaviour are similar to those made at the last inspection.
11. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour both in and around school are very good and a clear strength. Relationships both between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are very good and enhance learning and progress. Pupils work and play happily together. No inappropriate behaviour was observed. They willingly share equipment and respect the fabric of the building. There have been no exclusions. Pupils move around school sensibly and are polite and courteous. They relate well to adults, are friendly and articulate. Lunchtimes are well organised and orderly. Pre-school children join the pupils for lunch and they chat happily together.
12. A good example of pupils caring for each other was seen in a Y1/2 English lesson in which they showed much appreciation for each other's efforts. Pupils worked very well together in groups and pairs in a Y1/2 physical education lesson in which they balanced, learned from each other, evaluated one another's performance and discussed improvements.
13. Pupils' personal development is promoted through a range of responsibilities. Pupils act as classroom managers, prepare the hall for assemblies and get out the equipment for physical education. Parents confirm that their children develop confidence, are treated as individuals and help each other. Pupils keenly seek the certificates that are given out in assemblies for achievements in both their academic work and in their attitudes to it. Pupils work independently on tasks and concentrate, as was seen in a Y2/3 literacy lesson in which groups worked purposefully on a task involving suffixes. Reception pupils move confidently around the classroom and sensibly choose their own activities.
14. Pupils respect others; they take part in community events and competitions. Older pupils help young ones and the more able help those in need.

15. Levels of attendance are very good and remain well above the national average; this has a positive effect on learning and attainment. Authorised absence is below the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Efficiently conducted registrations take place before morning and afternoon sessions and all pupils know the routines. Attendance registers fully comply with statutory requirements. However, during the inspection attendance was exceptionally low due to several pupils being unwell. Pupils' very good punctuality enables lessons to start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Thirty-three lessons were observed during the inspection. Thirty-one of these were graded. Of these, nine were very good, 16 good and six satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the course of the inspection. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage and Years 1 and 2 is very good overall and it is good in Years 3 and 4. This represents an improvement in overall quality since the last inspection. Some good lessons were observed in most subjects that could be seen during the inspection. In religious education and history, however, lessons were presented soundly. No observations were made of geography and art and design, as these were not taught during the inspection period.
17. There are several strengths in teaching. There is a good tone in lessons. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and show a very calm approach. They manage pupils well and insist on high standards of behaviour. They value pupils' contributions to lessons and pupils are thanked for their efforts. Teachers smile a lot. These combined and common characteristics in the teachers' approaches give the pupils confidence to contribute in lessons. Pupils are confirmed in what they do. 'Good listening' and 'good sitting' are heard and pupils receive constant praise. The constant encouragement sets a very good tone for learning and pupils respond well as a result. They concentrate and show interest. Pupils want to try hard and join in. They do their best as a result, use their time well, work productively and make at least the expected, and often good, progress.
18. Teachers begin lessons promptly. Pupils are settled quickly at the start and the teachers then share the lesson intentions in language, which the pupils can understand. This sharing of the lesson outline enables the pupils to know how the lesson is to proceed and what is expected of them. It helps to engage their interest from the start.
19. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and lessons are well sequenced so that pupils can build up their knowledge and skills with a good understanding. Teachers make good use of the big books in English lessons and use a 'magic pointer' so pupils can follow the text. They question pupils well; for example, 'Why did we get louder when we read that part?' This was a reference to the increasing size of the print they had met. This leads to good discussion and allows the teachers to assess pupils' understanding. Teachers make good choices of text that link with the letter sounds or letter strings that the pupils are learning. This provides coherence to the pupils' learning. The planning of literacy and numeracy lessons is very thorough and very well structured enabling the pupils to build up their reading and numeracy skills to good effect. Teachers use resources well so that pupils can be independent and do things for themselves. Many pupils have letter string sound cards and dictionaries on their tables. They refer to these to find out how to spell words they are unsure of. They also make good use of their notebooks to try out spellings for themselves that they are uncertain about. They often find that they are right.

20. In mathematics lessons, teachers make effective use of individual whiteboards so that all pupils are thinking in mental sessions when pupils' numeracy skills are being developed. Pupils are challenged well in these sessions to think of their own ways of working examples out. The discussion of their methods furthers their speaking and listening skills, increases their confidence and helps them to make links between numbers. They make good progress in mathematics as a result. In both numeracy and literacy, teachers use the conclusion of lessons well to further pupils' learning, in mathematics, to consider more challenging examples in mental calculation and in English to share pupils' writing. For example, they remind the pupils of finger spacing to improve presentation in English and the correct use of upper and lower case letters.
21. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in both literacy and numeracy and also in other subjects, which are equally well planned, except for religious education, which is not of the same good standard. Teachers research the content of lessons well and this ensures that they can deal with pupils' questions when they arise. They use subject-specific vocabulary in all lessons so that the pupils acquire the correct use of words when describing what they are doing. In numeracy they use the words 'inverse relations' and 'product' and in literacy 'suffixes' and 'prefixes'. In work on magnetism in science they included words such as 'repel' and 'attract'.
22. The planning of all lessons is very thorough and links to a broader whole-school planning structure so that the teaching is well sequenced and makes very good links between subjects. The work on materials was seen in music as pupils worked with different types of instrument and noticed the different sound effects; in science as they studied the different properties of materials, and in art and design as pupils made collages with different materials.
23. Teachers match the work well to different abilities within the class in all subjects so that the pupils are challenged effectively in their work. In mathematics and English, the grouping of pupils by prior attainment across different ages and across the two key stages supports those who show above average talent. They make good progress as a result because the work is well matched to their capabilities. Pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for. They receive good support from teaching assistants, who help them in their activities. They often talk quietly with them during whole-class sessions so they can understand and offer ideas. However, on some occasions teaching assistants are too passive during such times and allow the pupils to lose concentration and interest. A newly arrived traveller pupil was included fully in all activities in the foundation stage and thoroughly enjoyed his experience of school and his work. Boys and girls are treated equally and given similar opportunities. All pupils are known well. Particularly good attention is given to individuals who have specific difficulties in aspects of their work and they often engage with teachers and teaching assistants on a one to one basis. Two governors are particularly active in supporting of pupils in this way and are very effective in what they do. The result of these combined arrangements is that pupils with specific difficulties make good progress.
24. Teachers prepare blackboard work beforehand so that no time is lost during the lesson in writing things up and this ensures that lessons move at a good pace and pupils are kept interested. In a science lesson in Year 1/2, the teacher had prepared an example of a neatly drawn table to show how the pupils were to record the results of their experiments on magnetism and this ensured that the pupils recorded their work correctly. The very careful explanation of the activities the pupils are to do is one of the marks of the good teaching in the school. During the activities themselves, teachers monitor the work the pupils are doing or work with a particular ability group.

This ensures that any difficulties are resolved quickly and that the pupils fully understand the work.

25. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to discuss, often achieved through challenging questions. During a Year 4 lesson about forces, the teacher posed the question, 'Why does a ball not go on for ever after it has been struck?' This provoked widespread discussion and challenged the pupils' thinking. In other lessons such as mental arithmetic, quick fire questions keep the pupils alert and focused, and inventive in finding ways of working things out.
26. The teaching in the foundation stage is lively and imaginative and extends to the outside environment, where different pots and pans and other objects are strung up for pupils to strike and listen to the different kind of sounds produced. The children squirt paint on to a damp sheet and watch as the colours merge to create different tones. The imaginative role-play corner engages their interest as it transforms over time from a clinic to a travel agent's to a wallpaper shop. Alongside these very good learning opportunities go well-planned activities that develop the children's numeracy and literacy skills so that a few write in words that show a good awareness of letter sounds by the end of the reception year.
27. Teachers' record-keeping systems are very thorough and they make very good use of these to plan the next stages of learning. They make good use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, as when the pupils describe their work in science and measure and record their results. Information and communication technology is also used well, for example in artwork, as they create abstract pictures in the style of Mondrian. Teachers make effective use of homework to enable the pupils to practise their skills, to research and to gain further confidence in reading. They mark work thoroughly and enable the pupils to improve.

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

28. Overall the quality and range of learning opportunities are good and this represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are required, however, to focus for very long spells on reading and written type activities for long periods of time during the morning session without a change of activity in Years 1 to 4 and this is very demanding of their concentration. All subjects now have schemes of work. Most contain detailed and effective long- and medium-term planning, apart from religious education in which the quality of planning and range of experience, particularly in Years 3 and 4, are not at the same good standard. The overall curriculum is now better because of the thorough planning and clear thinking that have gone into it, for example in the outstanding planning for the Years 1/ 2 mixed-age class. The planning for all the statutory subjects of the National Curriculum and for the foundation stage has been carefully and successfully interwoven to make links between subjects and set up many opportunities to enhance the moral, cultural and social development of the pupils.
29. All subjects meet statutory requirements. The provision for literacy and numeracy is good. Long- and medium-term plans for all National Curriculum subjects give a clear indication of what is being taught and how the needs of the different ability groups are being met. The skills taught in literacy and numeracy are also being used effectively in other areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology, science, history, design and technology and geography. The religious education curriculum follows the outline of aspects to be taught in the Local Education

Authority's Agreed Syllabus in religious education, but it is not interpreted with enough rigour. As a result, pupils' understanding is not sufficiently enhanced.

30. The provision for personal, social, citizenship and health education is very good and very effectively planned. It is taught through a number of subjects, such as science, and also through specific lessons. The outcomes seen in the pupils' behaviour are good. The school has an appropriately planned programme for sex education and drug awareness.
31. In all aspects of school life there is full inclusion and very good equality of opportunity for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and traveller children. Planning of lessons takes good account of pupils identified as gifted and talented. Opportunities for their progress and development are being found and taken. For example, pupils are purposely grouped across a three-year age range. There is a wide range of good quality extra-curricular activities available for pupils. These include sports, computer, French and musical activities. The pupils support these activities very well and they have a positive effect on the pupils' learning.
32. The sense of community within the school is very strong. This has been enhanced by the school's joint use of the community buildings, external recreation areas and general facilities, and by its participation in the joint planning for the whole site. Part of the school's philosophy is that it is a part of the whole village community.
33. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good, with visits from the local community providing valuable links. Several members of the community assist pupils who have learning difficulties. There are very good links with the local middle and upper schools, and with other first schools. Teachers from other schools visit and observe teaching within the school and these arrangements help to ensure a smooth transfer at age nine. The school provides opportunities for trainee teachers to observe and work under the supervision of experienced teaching staff. Intending teachers make observation visits before they begin their courses. Students who are undertaking other types of courses visit as part of their studies.
34. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and a strength of the school. The provision for the spiritual, social and moral aspects has improved since the last inspection. Good provision is made for the pupils' spiritual development. The daily acts of worship and assemblies provide an opportunity for learning about the world and moral issues and they contain moments for reflection. The theme of 'attitudes' during the inspection made particular reference to good and bad attitudes. In one of the assemblies, highly imaginative analogies were used. In one, the presenter gave a practical demonstration using drinking water with various liquids added and then tasted. The reactions of the pupils as water containing a fruit juice was compared with water mixed with vinegar and lemon juice proved the point well in relation to adopting the correct attitudes to one another. In another, a practical example of the careless dropping of litter involving two pupils and a teacher clearly brought home the point.
35. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Adults in the school set a very good example to the pupils and there are clear codes of behaviour. Pupils are taught to know right from wrong through their day-to-day interaction with staff, and through lessons and assemblies which indicate examples of very good moral practices. Some of the work in religious education lessons in Years 1 and 2 contains strong references to pupils' moral development. A strong moral dimension is seen in most lessons, where teachers constantly emphasise good behaviour and respect for others so that pupils understand what is acceptable conduct. This is reflected in

pupils' very good attitudes to school and their very good conduct and behaviour. Adults in the school also set a very good example by their courtesy, care and respect for pupils. Pupils respond well to this and, in turn, relate well to others and respect their views.

36. There is very good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers plan opportunities in many lessons for developing pupils' social skills, such as working together, taking turns and sharing. A range of visits during the year, including a residential visit for older pupils, provides good opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their social relationships with each other, their teachers and other adults. Pupils' studies about the local village and the general environment greatly enhance the pupils' awareness of social and moral issues. They help to develop a sense of individual responsibility and result in a strong sense of care, purpose and harmony in the school as a community. Pupils have well-planned opportunities to take responsibility in all aspects of the school's life.
37. The provision for pupil's cultural development is very good. Pupils have opportunities to study the richness of both their own and other cultures. History and geography provide links with pupils' own culture and with ancient cultures, other traditions and the past. The good range of extra-curricular activities, and visits and visitors, planned as part of the curriculum enriches the pupils' local cultural development. The multi-cultural provision is also strong with many opportunities for pupils to experience other cultures. Greek dancers, African music and costumes, Chinese, Ethiopian, and Jewish New Years and an Indian visitor with Indian food have all contributed to this aspect.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The quality of care provided for all pupils is very good. It is a clear strength of the school and it has improved since the last inspection. Parents and pupils value greatly the support they are given and are confident that appropriate and sensitive help will be given whenever needed. Pupils praise their kind, helpful and friendly teachers, who ensure that they understand, correct their errors and "show them the easiest way to work things out".
39. The headteacher, class teachers and secretary carefully monitor attendance and any concerns are promptly dealt with. Parents quickly inform the school of any absences. The education welfare officer works well with the school and liaises with parents as necessary. As a result, attendance levels are well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence.
40. The monitoring of behaviour is very good and high standards of behaviour prevail. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond positively. There is a detailed behaviour policy and school rules are appropriate. Additionally, class rules are negotiated with the pupils so that they have ownership of them. There have been no exclusions, and no inappropriate or oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. Lunchtime staff ensure that high behavioral standards are maintained both in the dining hall and outside. Play equipment encourages social skills, adds to the enjoyment of playtimes and supports the very good behaviour. Pupils know the sanctions and these are consistently applied. Pupils' personal development is effectively monitored on an informal basis. It is recorded formally in the foundation stage. Staff know their pupils very well and detailed comments are made in the annual reports to parents. Additionally, older pupils complete a self-assessment questionnaire and comment on their performance and targets on their annual reports.

41. The school has put an effective child protection policy in place since the last inspection and this clearly outlines procedures should any issue arise. Staff are trained and vigilant. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Good use is made of outside agencies for professional advice.
42. The school site is clean and well maintained. No health and safety hazards were observed and risk assessments take place. There are regular fire drills and electrical equipment checks. There is a sufficient number of trained first-aiders and parents are quickly contacted if necessary. A detailed personal, social and health education programme ensures appropriate guidance for health, sex and drugs education.
43. The school's assessment systems are very good and significantly improved on the previous inspection, when assessment arrangements were inconsistent and not sufficiently informative of new learning. Teachers know their pupils' capabilities well through a regular system of tests, the careful marking of pupils' work, and through noting their performance during lessons. They use this knowledge very well to plan work for the pupils. As a result, signed tasks very clearly match their prior attainment and take pupils on with their learning.
44. Record systems are good across most subjects but not yet well developed in religious education and information and communication technology. Teachers set learning objectives for the pupils and record progress in these. They set clear targets for pupils' further progress and these are shared with pupils and parents. There is a clear routine of internal tests and, additionally, Local Education Authority and national tests are carefully analysed and used. Pupils' opinions are valued. These are graphed and analysed in considering the enjoyment pupils experience in different aspects of their learning.
45. In the foundation stage, very detailed recording is made of the children's on-going progress, which contributes to an appreciation of the children's progress in the consecutive steps in learning. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are very good. They identify precise learning targets, success criteria, strategies to implement the plan, the resources which will be used and the activities to be undertaken. These are shared with the parents and the pupils so all are clear of the intended work. Records of guided reading activities facilitate judgements on pupils' attitudes, knowledge of how texts work, grammatical awareness and several other aspects, such as knowledge of letter sounds and word recognition skills. Records of work in National Curriculum subjects focus well on pupils' performance against key criteria related to National Curriculum expectations.
46. Marking is done well. It is up to date. Teachers often show interest in what the pupils have written by their comments and they suggest to the pupils how they might improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. As at the time of the last inspection, parents are very supportive of the school. Their views about the school, expressed through the parents' meeting, questionnaires and interviews are very favourable. They greatly value its work and have no major concerns. Parents particularly praise the good progress, the high standards of behaviour, the help given to children to become mature and responsible, and the quality of teaching. The inspection team agrees with these views. There are some mixed feelings about homework. A few parents consider the range of homework activities to be limited. Others think that there is too much homework. The team's view is that amounts of homework are appropriate given the pupils' ages, and the

range of homework activities very good. Some parents would prefer more information about how their child is progressing, but the inspection team's view is that opportunities are suitably provided and parents may request appointments if they want further information. Parents are well informed about their child's progress through well-written reports and informative parents' evenings. The annual reports to parents are of a good standard and comply with requirements. They sufficiently inform parents of their child's progress. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and targets for improvement clearly stated.

48. The school strives very hard to involve its parents and very largely succeeds. Communication with parents is good. They are kept well informed through newsletters and a termly sheet about pupils' forthcoming studies. The style is clear, friendly and encourages participation. New parents are given a detailed booklet to prepare their children for school. Additionally each child has its own book for parents to record information about reading progress. Parents are kept fully aware of the pupils' progress through the pupil's individual target book that records progress against National Curriculum statements. The comprehensive and attractively presented prospectus and Governors' Annual Report to parents are informative and fully comply with legal requirements. The entrance hall is welcoming, with staff photographs and names clearly displayed.
49. There are good links with the pre-school. The children and staff from the pre-school use the dining hall for lunch. A programme for pupils' transition to their new school ensures that they are well prepared.
50. The school welcomes parental involvement. Many parents were observed talking informally to staff both before and after school. Pupils greatly benefit from the support given by many parents, governors and friends, who regularly hear pupils read, help in class and with a range of activities and on visits. Two parents run the lending library and a governor organises the school bank.
51. A well-established and successful Friends' Association hosts a range of social and fund-raising events that are well supported throughout the year. Monies raised are carefully used to enhance resources, such as reading books, computer cartridges and sports equipment, thus adding interest and enjoyment for all pupils.
52. All parents have signed the home/school agreement. There is strong support for information meetings that have included curriculum assessment, information about national tests, year group arrangements and for literacy and numeracy. Parents greatly support their children at home by hearing them read and helping as necessary.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management are very good and are strengths of the school. The headteacher provides very effective leadership that gives a clear direction for the development and improvement of the school. This was noted at the last inspection, shortly after the headteacher's arrival, and has been maintained well since. The school is managed very well on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher juggles her joint teaching and headship responsibilities with equally effective commitment. Equality of opportunity is a well-developed aspect of its work and ensures that pupils make the good progress in key areas of work. The improvement in the quality of education since the last inspection owes much to the headteacher's leadership and to ensuring that pupils are challenged well in their work. Her consultative style has enabled the staff to feel part of the decision-making process. The school's aims, which focus on

the individual educational, social and personal development of the pupils, are promoted effectively. The governors and staff are committed to raising standards further and are clear about what has been achieved and what they need to do to achieve more improvement. There is a strong, shared sense of teamwork and determination to move forward and succeed. The school is now in a good position to make further strides forward and has good potential to do so.

54. The headteacher ensures that staff and governors understand the school's priorities for development and the need to work successfully as a team, and this has ensured that the school has moved on well since the last inspection. Teachers' planning has been very effectively undertaken, resulting in better teaching, and is one of the major reasons for the big improvement. This has resulted in a government achievement award for improved results in national tests and in Investors in People status. The headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. This is achieved through the well-planned arrangements, which involve the staff's help, to monitor teaching and pupils' attainments in different subjects of the curriculum. Performance management procedures are well developed and an integral part of the school's progress.
55. The school development plan is detailed for the current year with outline plans for the next three years. The plan is clearly set out with good reference to priorities, costings and the persons to lead specific initiatives. The school is on schedule in tackling the priorities in the plan.
56. All full-time members of the teaching staff have several areas of curriculum responsibility, which are clearly defined. They are well deployed and effective in their roles. They contribute to the priorities outlined in the detailed school action plan, which has very appropriate priorities for the school's further development.
57. The special needs co-ordinator is very effective and works closely with teachers and the learning support assistants. The management of the classroom assistants has been very effective, enabling them to work well with pupils and to provide helpful assistance to the staff. Liaison with outside agencies is good and ensures that all pupils, especially those with special educational needs, receive good quality support on a regular basis. Specific grants are well used to ensure good levels of support for designated pupils. This has the effect of helping the pupils with special needs and enables them to make good progress in their learning.
58. The governing body is keen and committed, fulfils all its legal duties and is effective in its work. Procedures in place ensure that the governors are kept well informed and they play an active role in shaping the direction of the school's work. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how the school needs to improve. This represents an improvement in their work since the last inspection.
59. The school has maintained the highly effective and efficient working practices in the planning, managing and monitoring of its finances. It seeks best value when making purchases. Budget setting procedures are well linked to development planning and reflect the educational needs of the pupils well. The school uses new technology satisfactorily in its administration. The use of an assessment program has enhanced the use of new technology as well as greatly improving the already good tracking of pupils' progress.
60. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are good. The Local Education Authority's guidance for newly qualified teachers is used well and appreciated by staff. New teachers who joined the school recently have been effectively integrated.

61. The level of staffing is good. Members of staff are deployed effectively according to their particular skills and expertise. All staff are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The level of staffing in all classes is satisfactory and teaching and non-teaching staff are experienced in meeting the needs of all children. Well-trained and dedicated support staff are deployed efficiently throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. They make a particularly good contribution to the attainment, progress and self-esteem of the pupils with special educational needs and the traveller pupil.
62. The accommodation is good overall with disabled access and has a good effect on the pupils' learning and safety. The foundation stage classroom is good in size and contains all the necessary facilities to provide well for the youngest children in the school, including a very good outside play area. The hall and the specific outside areas shared with the community are very good facilities. These support the effective teaching in physical education. The library is very small and does not easily provide for good library skills, though good use is made of the large shared work area for the newly installed computers. The current Year 4 classroom for the eldest and largest pupils is very small and does not make comfortable provision for teaching and learning. Teachers enhance the classrooms and other work areas with some very good displays that create a stimulating learning atmosphere. Resources throughout the school are satisfactory. They are good in physical education but unsatisfactory in religious education. There is a good provision of books for the literacy hour. Resources in general are well used and maintained, with easy access to those stored in the central activity area. Those stored in stock rooms are less easy to access.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The school has made substantial progress since the last inspection. In seeking to continue the development of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- Take steps to improve the curriculum provision and resources in religious education in Years 3 and 4 and ensure pupils make better progress;
(Paragraphs 8, 21, 28, 29, 44, 62, 128, 130)
 - Improve pupils' handwriting and general presentation of work and provide more opportunities for pupils to use their grammatical skills in story writing.
(Paragraphs 4, 79)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	9	16	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	29	52	19	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y 4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	74
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y 4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	12

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	02 [01]	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 [93]	100 [87]	100 [87]
	National	84 [84]	86 [86]	90 [91]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 [87]	100 [87]	100 [87]
	National	85 [85]	89 [89]	89 [89]

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

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	78	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	1	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 – Y 4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.36
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.11
Average class size	19.75

Education support staff: YR – Year 4

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	94

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	NA

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	½
	£
Total income	227,966
Total expenditure	224,983
Expenditure per pupil	3,000
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,472
Balance carried forward to next year	24,455

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	79
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	31	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	31	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	52	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	39	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	32	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	31	9	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	21	2	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	23	0	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	61	29	8	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	31	2	4	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	6	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	19	4	6	2

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

64. Children in the reception class begin school part-time at the start of the term before that in which they will become five, except autumn born children who attend one afternoon each week from June. The children begin full-time education at the start of the term in which they will become five. Overall, attainment on entry is slightly above average but there is a wide range. The teaching in the reception class is very good and, as a result, the children make good progress, similar to that reported at the last inspection. They achieve well. They make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Despite the fact that many of the children only receive part-time education for much of the year, most children reach the expectations for the start of Year 1, as at the time of the previous report. Small minorities of children are in advance of the expectations in literacy and numeracy activities.
65. The children are taught according to the national recommendations for children of their age, known as the early learning goals. The school makes very good use of these to plan an effective and well-structured curriculum in which good links are made between different aspects of learning. These links help to consolidate and reinforce what they experience. The teacher keeps detailed and accurate records of the children's on-going attainment in the different areas of learning and these are used very effectively to plan future work. The curriculum is imaginative and planned thoroughly to provide good quality experiences. The children enjoy these greatly and participate in them with much interest and good levels of perseverance.
66. The reception class has very good links with the pre-school group which meets on adjoining premises. The pre-school group follows aspects of the early learning goals and begins the early years record which is passed on to the reception class when the children transfer. Some of the activities during the week are shared jointly with the pre-school, such as at playtime, lunch-times and occasional teaching sessions. The pre-school and reception class undertake a short joint topic every half-term. Staff from the reception and pre-school group meet at regular intervals to discuss the curriculum.
67. There are very good induction arrangements to the reception class. Each child receives a good quality, personalised book to share with their parents before entry to help prepare the children for school. The links between the reception class and the pre-school group ensure that the children settle well into school and positively assist the children's progress and their social development. There are very good links with the parents through regular and informative newsletters. These encourage the parents' involvement in their children's education and give ideas about how they can help at home with the children's on-going studies. The reception teacher keeps a diary of each day's events, containing photographs and commentary of the work in the reception class. This is a very useful idea and much appreciated by the parents.
68. The reception class teacher's planning is very detailed, thoroughly thought through and provides a good range of experiences for the pupils. Very detailed aims for each area of learning are clearly put into practice in the curriculum. Planning ahead for the half-term's work is equally thorough and ensures a good coverage of all aspects of learning, with interesting activities and a good emphasis on the acquisition of the sounds which letters represent. There are precise learning intentions for the week's activities. Resources for learning are very well prepared for lessons.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. The teaching of this aspect is very good and children make very good progress in this area of their learning. They reach above the expected level by the end of the reception year. The teacher's very good relationships with the children and high expectations of their behaviour ensure that the children show respect for one another. They share the toys and other learning equipment and take turns. They make choices within the daily organisation and this helps their sense of independence and responsibility. They go on a range of local visits, for example to the wood and to the village, and also further afield for swimming activities in the summer term and to an art gallery, all of which strengthen their social confidence.
70. The children adapt quickly to the carefully organised routines. They sit quietly at snack times and eat from their home-made snack mats, taking turns to collect in the milk cartons and beakers. They take off their own coats and register themselves on arrival. The children dress and undress themselves for physical education and they try hard to manage their own buttons. They are made to put their clothes in a tidy pile on a chair, put on aprons automatically for messy activities, and quickly listen to their teacher when she asks for their attention.
71. They acquire a sense of moral responsibility through well chosen stories read to them, such as 'The Boy who Cried Wolf'. The children use their initiative in play, select activities sensibly and show good levels of concentration. They look after the equipment and are helpful in tidying up. They are independent in using the toilet and wash their hands after use. The children concentrate well during their chosen activities and when in more formal class groupings. The teacher makes effective use of a puppet and transfers matters which need resolving, as if they were the puppet's own problems at its own school. This de-personalises the problems and promotes whole-class discussion to resolve any issues of conflict, such as not sharing the spade in the sand. The method is a successful feature in contributing to the good harmony that exists in the class.

Communication, language and literacy

72. The teaching of this aspect is very good and the children make good progress. They are prepared well to begin reading and writing through both formal and informal opportunities to write and the good provision of literature that is read to them. A small number of the children already write on their own. The children are becoming acquainted with the order of the alphabet through the routine singing of the letters as they point to them on their place mats at snack time. Most children respond well to the good opportunities to speak aloud. They show good skills and confidence in speaking and in listening to others, generally without interruption. In this aspect of communication, language and literacy, their attainment is above expectations. Most are fluent in speech and speak in flowing sentences. In most other aspects of communication, language and literacy, attainment meets expectations, despite the fact that many pupils only receive part-time schooling for much of the year.
73. All the children recognise their name and all can write their name with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. The children enjoy listening to stories, which are read with good skill by the teacher and who sometimes sticks extra-large print into the book so that the children can follow more easily as she points to the words. Pupils know that print is read from left to right because of the good use the teacher makes of the pointer as she points to words as they are read during literacy work. They follow the plot with interest. Good quality questioning enables the children to predict what might happen next. They have learned and remember several letter sounds. However, few

children were observed to choose a book to look at during independent activities. A very small minority of the children can write their own words in decipherable print and create a letter to a story character. Others are beginning to match words in well-thought-out game situations and activities, exceptionally well produced for this purpose. For example, they find the correct words for different colours as they turn over and match words on appropriately coloured and laminated cards containing a sentence, such as, 'Picasso the frog was (colour)'. These relate to the story they have just heard. Other children 'write' as they play in the wallpaper shop and in other role-play activities and this helps them to know that writing conveys meaning. This concept is supported effectively through the good print environment around the classroom and on the wall displays. With adult help they use computers to make simple sentences about Elmer the elephant, and these activities further support their reading and writing development. The teacher makes good use of opportunities in other subjects to enable the children to develop precision in language. For example in physical education, the children have to clap 'in front' or 'at the side'. Throughout their work, the teacher listens very carefully to the children's comments and values what they have to say. This encourages their thought processes in speech and gives them confidence to speak in front of others.

Mathematical development

74. The teaching of this aspect is very good and the children make good progress. Most will reach the expectations by the end of the reception year, despite the comparatively short time that some children have been in the reception class because of the admission arrangements. By the end of the reception year, most children can count to ten, count up to ten objects accurately and recognise their numbers to 10. Most count beyond ten. They count backwards from ten to zero and a few backwards from 20. They sort and match objects or pictures. They recognise the pattern of dots on a die. They know their colours and sort according to colour. Most can add one more than though they find one less than more difficult. The children are familiar with positional language, such as behind and beside. They recognise the more commonly used two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, square, triangle and rectangle and a few three-dimensional shapes, such as cylinder. They join in well chosen number rhymes in the style of 'Five Red Poppies' and count down as they sing each verse with one poppy less. They are becoming familiar with comparative language, such as longer and shorter. The children make accurate patterns with two and three different colours of macaroni in order and make necklaces for their Mardi Gras carnival. They apply their knowledge and identify simple pattern on wrapping paper and become excited with the choice of some, such as the pattern made by the Rug Rats wrapping paper.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. The children are given good opportunities to widen their knowledge and understanding of the world and they are on course to reach national expectations for the end of the reception year. The teaching of this aspect is very good and the children make good progress. The children know that there are different countries and celebrate some of the festivities related to these countries, such as American Independence Day and become acquainted with specific customs. They made American flags, played basketball and made pop corn. They celebrated the Ethiopian new year, made Ethiopian drums and danced to Ethiopian music. The children made honey cake for the Jewish New Year and celebrated the festival of Sukkot. At Chinese New Year, they dressed up as dragon. During the inspection, they celebrated 'Pancake Day' by learning about the different customs in some English

towns and having pancake races. They combined with the pre-school group and took part in a 'Mardi Gras' carnival wearing 'grass skirts' and playing musical instruments.

76. The teacher provides very good opportunities for children to increase their general understanding through their role-play activities, such as the travel agent's, the wallpaper shop and the clinic. The teacher makes good use of natural elements, such as the children's enjoyment of the wind and rain, and develops their language further through these. They make a pile of grass cuttings and see what happens when the wind blows. They learn to use the computer as they gain increasing skill with the mouse when they dress Teddy. They use a picture dictionary program and can delete letters using the backspace key. They use the arrow keys to find more pages of words. The children gain an understanding of time through the teacher's reference to yesterday and tomorrow and the oldest and youngest in their own families. They make glasses from different coloured acetate and see how things of a known colour change when they look at them with their special glasses. They bake and note the change of state after the food has been in the oven.

Physical development

77. The teaching of this aspect is very good, and the children make good progress and reach the expected standard because they have good opportunities to take part in a range of physical activities with different equipment. The teacher makes good use of the newly created external area and the large hall. Children's play with bats and balls, bean bags and quoits helps their catching skills and hand and eye co-ordination. They bounce medium-sized balls and most show good catching skills on the rebound. They jump two-footed but have more difficulty in skipping and hopping. The children walk on tip-toes and walk backwards without stumbling. The teacher enables them to participate in a range of activities that help them to be aware of others and to make good use of space. They move along benches in different ways, climb up and over trestles and slide along benches. They show confidence on the climbing frame and in the summer term go swimming. The children ride the large wheeled toys with good control and pull one another along in trucks or give rides to others on the tandem bike. They control construction pieces effectively. The children use paste spreaders, paint brushes and scissors with good skill.

Creative development

78. The children have a good range of opportunities for their creative development and make good progress in this aspect of their learning in reaching the expectations for the end of the reception year. They create pictures using different techniques, for example using a marbling technique to create Christmas cards, or different materials and paper to make collages. The teacher ensures they can mix their own paint and wash the brush after use before using a different colour and this enables them to work in an ordered way. The children watch with amazement as they spray different colours on to a damp sheet and see the effects of the merging colours. They print patterns using pieces of vegetable and observe the different effects. They make thumb print patterns and notice that all produce different patterns. They paint pictures using several colours and at times combine different effects, such as glitter and paint. The teacher provides music for the children to listen to when getting changed for physical education and in more formal settings. They enjoy singing in a group and keeping together as they sing. They sing their alphabet with a good rhythm and pace. They dance to music of 'Peter and the Wolf' and make patterns with the drums. The children design and make their own ice cream and biscuits. The teacher took advantage of a recent snowfall to observe footprints in the snow and allowed them to

write their names in it. During the inspection, the children made their own 'grass skirts' and made their own musical instruments to take part in the 'carnival'.

ENGLISH

79. The school has made good progress in English since the last inspection and overall attainment is higher. It is above average in their speaking, listening, spelling and reading skills throughout the school and also in their knowledge of grammar. Their overall attainment in imaginative writing is in line with expectations throughout the school. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and to use their imagination but they use their writing skills well across the curriculum. Both Local Education Authority and national test results confirm a steady improvement over time in pupils' overall attainment, though within any specific year the proportion of pupils with special educational needs can have a dramatic affect on results in a fairly small cohort of pupils. The current cohort of pupils is not quite as able as the previous one. Whilst most pupils' attainment is in line with expectations and a significant percentage above, the high percentage of pupils who reach the expected level leads overall to above national average results. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is a result of the good grounding the school gives the pupils in the sounds that individual and groups of letters make and the thorough programme given to this. This builds effectively on the good start that the children make in the reception class.
80. The school makes good provision for pupils who have special educational needs, and for those who achieve more highly, through the grouping of pupils by ability and the individual help and support given to pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum is very well planned and the very good records kept of pupils' ongoing progress, including letter sounds, ensure that needs are met. The individual education plans for pupils who have special educational needs are very precise and referred to in planning lessons. The school makes very good assessments of pupils' progress in guided reading.
81. By the end of Year 2, pupils take notes and show an above average appreciation of grammar. They know about plurals, similes, adjectives and adverbs. Many pupils punctuate their work correctly with correct use of full stops and capital letters. Several pupils use speech marks correctly. They are aware of abbreviated forms such as 'll'. Their application of grammar in writing is good but they do not have enough opportunities to write at length. Spelling is good. Pupils learn patterns of words. They have their own personal dictionaries and have good reference support materials, which help them to maintain a good standard. Pupils' handwriting skills are satisfactory, but improving in Years 1 and 2 through the use of manuscript style books which give the pupils a good awareness of the relative size of letters. They begin to join their letters. They try hard with this and receive positive teacher comment, and also developmental points and the correct formation where there are errors.
82. By the end of Year 4, pupils' handwriting skills are variable, many could do better, but overall it is of a satisfactory standard. The pupils write for a range of purposes but rarely at any length. They write well for instructional purposes, such as to make a fruit salad, and some show humour as they instruct 'How to annoy your teacher' concluding with a last remark, 'Wait until she explodes'. This writing typifies the good and natural relationships that the teachers have with their pupils. They write poems of a satisfactory quality for their age. They make good use of word-processed text on occasions, as when they merge text and graphics to write newspaper articles. Higher attaining pupils use commas and know they are used for lists. They occasionally make play scripts. Most pupils show good awareness of speech marks and are

gaining in confidence in the use of apostrophes but do not always use them correctly or consistently. When they do write imaginatively, they are beginning to put some description into their work and show sensitivity as they write, although with mixed quality of imagery. *'The ruby, hot sun gleamed on the dusty yellow sand and on the green crops, but also on the poor farmers'*. Their explanatory writing is developing well, as when they describe how a hot air balloon works. They try to make writing interesting by setting the atmosphere and using good descriptive language. The more able pupils write with a good reference to paragraphing but for most this is not yet established.

83. Pupils make good gains in their reading skills and their overall attainment is above average. Nearly half the current cohort of Year 2 pupils are capable of obtaining the higher level in reading at age seven at the end of the academic year. At age seven, the pupils often read with good accuracy and obey punctuation marks. They know several strategies for trying to work out an unknown word, such as reading on, breaking the word up and using picture clues. They know about contents and index but sometimes confuse fiction and non-fiction. Their comprehension of what they have read is often good. They show a good level of interest for their self-chosen library books but discuss their scheme books with much less interest. They are often well supported by visiting adults and their parents, in addition to the work that is done with their teachers. By age nine, nearly half the pupils are reading at a level above that expected for their age. Pupils read expressively with a sense of audience and meaning. They show a good level of interest in books and have developed regular reading habits. Some have good, and most at least sound, research skills. Occasionally pupils who have special educational needs are reading books that are too difficult for them and their reading difficulties are being reinforced.
84. The teaching of English is good overall. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4. The planning of work in Years 1 and 2 is outstanding in meeting the needs of two age groups and different abilities. All teachers set a good tone in lessons and there are happy working relationships that enable the pupils to feel confident. They are receptive of pupils' ideas. As a result, pupils contribute their ideas well to class discussion and an open atmosphere facilitates critical discussion of one another's work with the aim of helping one another. The work is interesting and the pupils work well on tasks and complete a good quantity of work in the time available. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use terms such as 'suffixes' and 'figurative language' appropriately. They praise the pupils' efforts judiciously, as when a pupil wrote, *'I see trees that rustle like a dragon's breath'*. Teachers explain work well and match it appropriately to meet the pupils' stage of development. Sometimes good use is made of time targets that give a sense of urgency to the work. Pupils usually behave well but Year 4 pupils sometimes become over enthusiastic and interrupt one another when they are speaking. The teaching assistants sometimes sit too passively when class discussions are taking place and do not engage the pupils with special educational needs enough in quiet dialogue.
85. The subject has been managed very well. The resources for the literacy hour are good and there is a very good provision for guided reading and big books. The co-ordinator has planned the curriculum thoroughly and moulded the literacy strategy effectively to fit the school's needs. Since the last inspection, the school has given good attention to planning an effective spelling programme, with improved results as a consequence. The teaching arrangements ensure there is good challenge for all pupils. The records of pupils' progress are very detailed; they include pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and key words, and are used well to plan future activities. The school has had to use its library to create a new classroom and this has had an

adverse affect on pupils' on-going general library skills, though they show good knowledge of finding information in books.

MATHEMATICS

86. Pupils' attainment is above what is expected at ages seven and nine. This is an improvement at both ages since the last inspection, particularly at age seven, when it was below. Pupils make good progress in the subject and achieve well throughout the school. Lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work confirm the good progress. This is also shown in the very thorough and extensive assessment data the school keeps on pupils' progress as they move up through the school. Pupils' attainment has been raised in several ways. Teachers regularly check pupils' work for progress, and individual targets are made known to the pupils and parents so that all parties are aware of the next stages in learning. The pupils are grouped according to ability across Years 2 to 4. This has greatly helped teachers to provide an appropriate challenge of work in order to raise the standards and the mathematical confidence of the pupils.
87. By the end of Year 2, pupils count up and down in two's and know their odd and even numbers to 100 and beyond. Most pupils count in tens and fives to 100. Pupils are able to explain with good reason their stages of thinking when working out a problem. They measure accurately in centimetres and have a good knowledge of shapes and their properties. They are familiar with coins and can use them to add specific amounts of money up to a pound and beyond. They tell the time with good accuracy and have a good appreciation of the position of figures in numbers to 1000. Many pupils add and subtract three-digit numbers and know simple fractions. They adopt good techniques to multiply and divide two-digit numbers.
88. By the end of Year 4, pupils have a good knowledge of shape and readily identify lines of symmetry. They measure accurately using standard units such as millimetres and apply their measuring skills to solve real situations. They collect and record data on charts and graphs and have a good understanding of how to interpret information from the charts. Pupils add, subtract and round numbers up and down to the nearest ten or 100. Most know their multiplication tables and have a sound grasp of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They use the correct mathematical language.
89. All pupils complete a good quantity of work in lessons and the standards of presentation are good. All staff have received effective training in the subjects and the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well. Numeracy lessons are divided into appropriately timed stages. Lessons begin with an effective warm-up and conclude with a well-used time when consolidation of learning takes place and further challenges are issued. Lesson objectives are made clear at the start of each lesson so all pupils are very aware of their own learning. Homework supports learning well. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in this subject.
90. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. All teaching observed was at least good and much very good, which marks an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers use a good variety of teaching techniques. Where teaching is very good, the mental sessions are lively and have a sense of urgency, and all pupils participate fully. In the best lessons the teachers have a clear idea of their objectives, use the correct mathematical language and set realistic, achievable and challenging targets. In these lessons, the higher attaining pupils are given good extension work that takes their learning a stage further.

91. There is a satisfactory range of modern resources that are well used and this has had a good effect on teaching and learning. Planning across the years is very good and the teachers have adopted an extensive system for assessing, tracking and targeting pupils' progress. The frequent assessments are used and recorded so as to develop and inform daily planning. The Local Education Authority and the headteacher have monitored mathematics teaching and this has helped to raise standards. Pupils experience full coverage of the National Curriculum in the subject. The school gives a good emphasis to pupils' understanding and ability to explain and apply their calculations.

SCIENCE

92. Pupils' attainment in science by ages seven and nine is above expectations. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Most pupils reach the expected standard and a significant minority of pupils exceed them. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected level have increased significantly since the last inspection. In the 2002 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils in the smallish cohort reaching the expected level was in the top five per cent of schools in the country.
93. By age seven, pupils sort objects into magnetic and non-magnetic categories. They know which foods are healthy. They have a good understanding of the properties of some materials and can sort them accordingly. They undertake research activities, as when they find the best place in the classroom to melt a block of ice most quickly. They understand that some materials can change their state when they are heated, as when clay is transformed into a teapot. They can sort pictures of humans at different stages of maturity into the correct order from babyhood to old age. They are beginning to understand the need to keep things fair when undertaking tests.
94. By age nine, pupils show an above average knowledge of science in their general discussion. They talk about space facts and ask interesting questions such as 'Is space above or around us?' They sort animals into vertebrates and invertebrates. They know that push and pull are types of forces and that force is measured in Newtons after Isaac Newton. They have a good understanding of the effect of gravity, as when they discuss the factors that cause a ball to slow down after it has been hit. Most can read a thermometer correctly. They know that solids have a fixed shape and liquids take on the form of the container into which they are put. They appreciate that some solids, such as salt and sand, can act like liquids when they are put into containers. They sort materials into those that are opaque, translucent and transparent. They gain knowledge about how animals keep warm or cool in different climates by studying how they live. They make tables to predict their experiments but do not often reason their predictions. They set up hypotheses about whether people with the longest legs jump the furthest and organise their own investigations well.
95. Only two lessons could be observed during the inspection, one in Years 1/2 and one in Year 4. The teaching was very good in the former and satisfactory in the latter but good over time as evidenced from the pupils' work books. Common strengths in teaching include the good use of scientific language, the well prepared lessons, the good provision of resources and challenging questions that make the pupils think. In the very good lesson, effective use was also made of pupils' mathematical skills as the pupils sorted materials into magnetic and non-magnetic sets with some articles containing parts of both, such as a peg. Pupils realised that these would have to be placed in the intersection of the sets. The concluding part of the lesson was used well to take the pupils' learning on further as the teacher discussed the application of the principles of magnetism to the recycling industry with the pupils. She also discussed the effect of different shapes and sizes of magnets the pupils had used in their

experiments. In the Year 4 lesson, the pupils were well motivated but their enthusiasm to take part in discussion resulted in interruptions whilst others were talking and spoiled the smooth flow of the lesson. In both lessons pupils with special educational needs were well supported and gained much from the practical activities, whilst pupils with a higher prior attainment were effectively challenged in the recording of their results.

96. Pupils enjoy science and are enthusiastic. Little things that the teachers do often encourage them meaningfully. The Year 1/ 2 teacher had prepared badges for the pupils containing the words 'magnetic detective' and these were stuck on to their jumpers with pride. Pupils show good levels of interest and raise interesting points to follow up. Some boys in Year 4 stated that space is all around whilst others stated it is beyond the earth. In the Year 1/ 2 class, pupils undertook their activities sensibly, organised their investigations well and shared the resources amicably. They behaved well.
97. The science co-ordinator is well informed and has good subject knowledge. She manages the subject effectively and has organised the resources, which are satisfactory in amounts and range, so they are easy to access. She has monitored work in the subject effectively and obtained the pupils' views of science. There are good links with the middle school in the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for the subject's further development. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and make comments that will help the pupils to improve and think about what they have done and set targets for future improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

98. No specific teaching was observed during the inspection as the main focus of the half-term's work was on design and technology. Evidence was drawn from pupils' work around the school and their art folders. Pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily within a wide range of art experiences. The breadth of experience is a major strength of the subject and ranges from textile work to pattern making. Pupils' attainment in art and design is similar to that at the time of the previous inspection in Years 1 and 2, but it is not as high in Years 3 and 4. It meets national expectations throughout the school.
99. By the end of Year 2, pupils analyse artists' work and describe their feelings about it. They make prints, collages and draw to communicate ideas and meanings. They say what they think and feel about their own and other's work and suggest ways of improving. They look at plants around the school, draw sketches and make printing blocks using their designs. They tie-dye fabric and use their printing block to stamp on the design in the style of William Morris.
100. By the end of Year 4, pupils examine carefully the styles of different artists in relation to scapes of land, sea and city. They compare brush strokes and colours, for example the short brush stroke of Van Gogh with the effects created by Seurat. They mix their own paints, consider the build up of colour and the effect they are trying to create. They use a range of materials, such as charcoal and pastels, as when they design their own well-proportioned Greek vases. They create abstract images in the style of Mondrian and Klee. They have made good use of information and communication technology to explain their designs and e-mailed instructions to another school to see if those pupils could create the design from their instructions, thus applying their literacy skills well.

101. The co-ordinator is well organised and very knowledgeable. She has developed thorough plans for the curriculum across the school and planned a scheme of work, which it is intended to improve further. She has encouraged pupils' work in art by entering it in a golden jubilee art competition and establishing an artist of the month, which helps the pupils to gain knowledge about different famous artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Pupils' attainment in design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 4 is in line with national expectations. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below at the end of Year 2 and in line at the end of Year 4. Pupils now make expected progress throughout the school in the skills of designing, making, technical skills and evaluating their work. This also represents an improvement since the last inspection.
103. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 design a multi-coloured shirt and this links with their work on Joseph and his multi-coloured coat in religious education and the use of repeated patterns and shapes in mathematics. Their designs are well labelled and drawn accurately. They have developed appropriate cutting and joining skills when making their paper patterns. All pupils are well aware of the need to record their designs, make any modifications and evaluate the whole design process. They make good progress in the skills of using the appropriate tools. They have also designed a fruit salad with good reference to nutrition and vitamins.
104. Years 3 and 4 pupils design a Jack-in-the-box. They have completed a design and are starting to put together the frame for the box. This has led to the need for careful measuring and cutting of pieces of wood. All the pupils are fully aware of the need for accuracy, care and safety in both procedures. They make good progress in these specific skills. Previous good work was seen in the making of bags for different purposes, with an interesting display that indicated a thorough knowledge of the whole design process from the initial plan to the finished article. All pupils respond well to the challenges set, are very interested in their work and behave well.
105. The teaching seen was very good in all lessons; this represents an improvement since the last inspection, when it was sound at seven and good at nine years. The very good teaching is characterised by high expectations, good subject knowledge and inventive, realistic planning, which links other areas of the curriculum together. Investigation and well-defined practical tasks that extend pupils' grasp of a range of skills and techniques are also an important part of the very good teaching.
106. The leadership of the subject is good. Long- and medium-term plans incorporate topics and skills that are well matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum and new and modern resources have been bought. Assessments are very thorough, regular and well recorded. The subject is well monitored for planning and pupils' work; there is now a need to monitor the teaching.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

107. Because of the nature of the timetable in which the subjects are blocked for half a term each, three lessons of history and no geography lessons were seen during the week of the inspection. Inspection evidence is, therefore, also based on the analysis of pupils' work in books and displays, and on interviews with teachers, talking with pupils as well as the three lessons.

108. Pupils' attainment in both subjects by ages 7 and 9 are in line with what is expected for their age. This represents an improvement in geography since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was unsatisfactory at age 7. In history, levels of pupils' attainment have been maintained. In both history and geography, both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make sound gains in their learning. Pupils' achievement is sound. The teachers' planning, use of resources and the scheme followed are very thorough. This ensures good coverage of the subject's content and the necessary progression of the skills taught. Good natural links are well forged between subjects by the extensive and very good planning.
109. Pupils enjoy both subjects. They behave well and have positive attitudes to both history and geography. These attitudes have been maintained since the previous inspection. Both areas of study make very good contributions to the social, moral and cultural knowledge of the pupils through extending their knowledge of the world and its peoples' present and past. Their awareness of social and moral issues, particularly in their local studies, is being well developed.
110. In history by age seven, the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past; for example by looking at clothes worn in the past; by visiting places of local historical importance, looking at houses, transport, schools and household objects from the past. They use photographs and compare past and present lifestyles. By age seven, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the idea of past and present, and some of the differences in life styles in times gone by. Year 2 pupils have studied the lives of Florence Nightingale and St Edmund. The skills of looking at photographs of people, clothes and objects from the past, and of finding out what they can tell us about the past are taught well and understood. In geography they have been looking at the local area around the village, the roads, houses and routes to school; map skills are well taught and understood.
111. The teaching in history is satisfactory and one good lesson was seen. The teaching motivates the pupils who, in turn, apply themselves well and show interest in the subject. This was well illustrated in the lesson seen where the teacher focused the pupils well on the task of looking at and examining sources of information from Ancient Greece. The aim was to bring out the differences in lifestyles between then and now and to see how much reliable information can be gathered from art and pottery; this was achieved by good teaching. The planned opportunities for cross-curricular links between history and geography, and also with other subjects, such as numeracy and literacy, through displaying information found on charts and graphs and the written and spoken word, work effectively.
112. The support given to the teaching staff by the teaching and classroom assistants greatly enhances the pupils' learning opportunities. Very good planned opportunities for assessment and recording are now in place. Good monitoring of the planning of the subjects by the co-ordinator ensures the coverage of the curriculum. The use of visits, visitors and trips greatly enhances the teaching of the subjects. The level of resources is satisfactory. Geography and history are led by two enthusiastic, knowledgeable and keen co-ordinators who manage the subjects well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology meets expectations by ages seven and nine and is similar to that at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make sound progress and satisfactory achievements. The curriculum is planned well and each pupil has a guaranteed minimum amount of taught time on the computers weekly. There is extra provision in some lessons on a rota basis for using

information and communication technology across the curriculum. The computers have a good range of software which enables the pupils to acquire a range of skills appropriate for their ages.

114. By the end of Year 2, pupils use an art package and they repeat patterns and use the available selection of tools to make pointillism pictures in the style of the artist Seurat. They change the size of the font and select different colours and types of font for presentation purposes. They word process their own work, for example to complete a given story or to retell a story in the correct sequence, and use a word bank to obtain words they are unsure of. They use the space bar effectively. They edit text and make good use of the scroll bar to find particular parts of their work. They are able to select words from a drop down menu when they write their own poems. They make good use of computers in numeracy, for example to count and classify three-dimensional shapes and create their own graphs with support from the information they have. They plot a route for a moving toy on the floor and estimate the distances and angles of turn with good judgement.
115. By the end of Year 4, pupils design their own newspaper page and combine text and graphics. They make a table to insert the contents. They design their own electric circuit. They set out instructional writing for an abstract painting in the style of Mondrian and e-mail this to pupils in another school to see if they can draw the original. They write independently about the senses using the arrow keys, delete and backspace keys well to delete and insert letters and words. They use an art program to make firework scenes, taking care to make the colours stand out against a black background. They begin to program in simple terms using repeat commands for distances and angles to make a prescribed shape or pattern. They make good use of the Internet to find out more about their studies.
116. Much of the teaching is carried out by an enthusiastic and well-informed teaching assistant who has regularly kept herself updated. The quality of her interaction with the pupils is good overall. Very occasionally her keenness for them to succeed results in her doing too much for the pupils and they are not talked through procedures so that they can do things for themselves.
117. Computers are used well for pupils who have special educational needs and they have special equipment which enables them to succeed at their own level.

MUSIC

118. Pupils' attainment in music is similar to that previously reported and is in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4. Pupils make good progress in their appreciation and general knowledge of music, and satisfactory progress overall. They achieve soundly. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to listen to music in assemblies and there is a planned programme for these occasions. This ensures pupils listen to a wide variety of music, including classical music and music from other cultures and countries. During the week of the inspection, pupils listened to music from China and Africa. The music curriculum is well planned and occasionally widened by visiting music specialists. A drumming specialist recently visited the school and a further visit is planned.
119. By age seven, pupils know the names of several percussion instruments, such as glockenspiel and cabasa. They can tell the difference between high and low sounds and between quiet and loud music. They recognise the difference between the long sound made by the rainmaker instrument and the short sounds of the tom toms. They learn to score the pitch of a nursery rhyme using dots in different positions. They then

guess the nursery rhyme dot arrangements by interpreting their formation on the score of another group of pupils. They make long and short sounds using percussion instruments and think of their own techniques for making the sound of different instruments short or long. They think of ideas, such as deadening the sound of the cymbal by placing the cymbals together. They sing in tune with the melody and enjoy their singing.

120. By age nine, pupils tap naturally and sway their bodies to the rhythm of Greek music and listen maturely. They suggest the mood for music that they listen to. They study Mondrian's artwork and interpret it to make compositions in pairs. They use maracas to make the swishing sound of water. They draw pictures in response to music. They design their own ways of representing their composition in written form so that they can play it again on a different occasion.
121. The teaching observed during the inspection was good. Good use is made of the musical expertise on the staff to ensure that lessons are well informed and the expertise spread across year groups. Lessons are well planned and reflect the thoroughly planned curriculum. Good links are made between different aspects of the pupils' work, such as the music and history of the Greeks, which the pupils study. Teachers value pupils' contributions and they are thanked for their hard work and effort. Teachers make good use of music vocabulary and introduce musical terms which extend pupils' knowledge of music. The correct terms are used for the instruments. Resources for lessons are set out in advance so the lessons flow smoothly. Classes are well managed and the lessons well structured with a variety of content that keeps the pupils interested.
122. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well and has worked hard to improve planning and general provision in the subject. She has good subject knowledge and keeps herself updated by attendance at courses. Resources are of good quality, sufficient in amounts with a satisfactory range. They are very well stored on trolleys and extremely well organised so that pupils can find particular instruments easily and return them respectfully to their place on the trolley. A small choir and two recorder groups extend the musical interest of some pupils. The co-ordinator arranges concerts at different occasions during the year in which pupils from different classes perform for the parents and others. The pupils took part recently in a community concert promoted by the East Anglian music trust.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Pupils' attainment is above that expected by the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations by the end of Year 4. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The National Curriculum programmes of study are covered in full, including swimming. In gymnastics, movement and games lessons, pupils make sound progress. They improve their skills and work collaboratively throughout the school. The school reports that all pupils achieve the national target of being able to swim 25 metres by age nine.
124. In all lessons observed, pupils warm up, and know the importance of exercise and safety. They cool down correctly at the end of a period of exercise. All teachers provide good role models by changing for the lessons, and pupils change into suitable clothing.
125. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 create movements with different balances with increasing control and poise. Year 3 pupils use a hockey stick and can stop, dribble, control and strike the ball. Year 4 pupils put together a Greek dance sequence linked to their

history work on Ancient Greece. They moved around the hall with increasing poise and fluency and interpreted the music with appropriate moves and dramatic gestures. Pupils improve their performance through evaluation and discussion.

126. Three lessons were seen. Two were good and one was very good. The teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers encourage pupils and challenge them to think about their performance and how to improve. As a result, pupils enjoy physical education; their response is good and they work enthusiastically. Their behaviour is good. Lessons gradually develop the intended skill or sequence. Teachers have good subject knowledge, give clear instructions which emphasise how improvements can be made, and give encouraging and appropriate praise.
127. The school has a good range of modern resources and equipment that are well used and the subject is well led by a keen co-ordinator. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There is a good range of after school sports activities with the possibility of competitive matches in the near future. There is now a need for time to be allocated for the monitoring of the teaching and standards throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. The school plans its programme of work according to the Local Education Authority's Agreed Syllabus. Whilst the pupils' attainment in Year 2 meets the expectations outlined, attainment in Year 4 is below. Pupils' attainment was below expectations in religious education in Year 2 at the previous inspection and in line with expectations at Year 4. The situation is now reversed.
129. By the end of Year 2, pupils are enabled to explore their feelings. They compare negative statements such as 'I don't like your shoes' with more positive statements such as 'Can I help you?', 'Come and play with me'. They think of themselves as members of different groups, and as a member of a family preparing them to understand religious and church affiliations. They are taught to respect others and to think of things that are wrong and that affect others adversely, and to write statements in their books which show a good understanding of right and wrong. They remember the 'golden rule': 'Treat others as you would like them to treat you'. They know how decent human beings behave and suggest 'being gentle', 'being nice' and 'being polite'.
130. By the end of Year 4 pupils have some misconceptions about what religious education is about. They state 'religious education is about what's special to you, your friends and family'. They study such concepts as bravery but do not link this particularly with religious figures, such as the crucifixion of Christ. They have some but not totally accurate conceptions of the things that Christians do. They suggest ideas such as 'get Christened, marry in church, own a Bible, help others'. They write about what is important to Christians in their own notebooks but their drawings are not clear and sometimes there is no writing to explain their drawings and some do not clearly denote Christianity. Much of the work is copied from other sources or is stuck in sequence from teacher prepared text, such as the work on John the Baptist.
131. The work the school plans in religious education, particularly in Years 3 and 4, lacks a good structure and cohesion and does not build sufficiently well on previous work. As a result, pupils do not have a clear perception of what religious education is about and their knowledge is confused. Discussion with some Year 4 pupils revealed that they know that the Bible is the holy book of the Christians but they could not name parts of a church or church furniture. They do not remember much detail of the two other faiths they have studied previously. They know about the Christmas Eve service as a

special festival and the reason for this but they could not recall any accurate detail of other special Christian festivals. They spoke about Joseph riding to Bethlehem on a donkey at Easter because his wife was pregnant. They had little recollection of Judaism, which was a Key Stage 1 study.

132. The teaching of religious education in the lessons observed was satisfactory. Over time, pupils' progress is satisfactory in Years 1/ 2 but unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The quality of work in pupils' books is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The part-time co-ordinator recognises that the work needs review and that there are no detailed plans or records of pupils' attainments for the subject such as are found in other areas of work in the school. Currently resources for the subject are unsatisfactory and not well respected. There is a lack of up to date video materials to help pupils' understanding, and too few artefacts to discuss the different religions studied in sufficient depth.