

INSPECTION REPORT

SANDLINGS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Woodbridge Base, Woodbridge

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124685

Headteacher: Mr D M Fox

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven
3961

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 March 2003

Inspection number: 248616

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Easton Road Sutton Woodbridge Base Woodbridge
Postcode:	IP12 3TD
Telephone number:	01394 420444
Fax number:	01394 461330
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Tim Jacobs
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3961	M Raven	Registered inspector	Mathematics Physical education Foundation Stage Education inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9520	J Leigh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11901	P Lowe	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
31029	P Thrussell	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Cheshire
SK8 1BB

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sandlings Primary School serves 123 boys and girls aged from four to eleven. There are more boys than girls on roll. Pupils are taught in six classes, with mixed age groups in the two classes for Years 1 and 2 and in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school is situated on the Woodbridge Airbase, where it was originally opened in 1995 to serve mainly the children of service families – a very mobile population. In the past year most service families have moved from the base and this has cut the school's roll by almost a half. Some new families are currently joining the school from temporary civilian accommodation on the base and the roll remains unstable. Most pupils now come from civilian families, although some service families remain. In addition to pupils living on the base, others travel in from another former military base some seven miles away and from the villages scattered around this isolated rural location. Pupils come almost exclusively from a White United Kingdom background and there are none learning English as an additional language. A low proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. A higher than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and the proportion of those with statements of special educational needs is well above average. Pupils' special needs cover a wide range of physical, behavioural, communication and learning difficulties. Because of the nature of the school's population, a very high proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times other than is normal. The school has experienced a typical annual turnover of pupils of around 50 per cent until last year. This means that pupils' educational background is often very unsettled. Although the full range of accomplishments is represented, overall pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Pupils achieve very well in response to very good teaching, which ensures that the learning needs of the full range of boys and girls are met very successfully. The school very successfully promotes very good attitudes to learning and very good personal development. The headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities provide very effective leadership and the school is managed very efficiently. It offers very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the headteacher and other key staff are very good.
- The teaching is of very good quality overall, with teachers supported very strongly by teaching assistants.
- Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress.
- The school is very good at meeting the needs of the full range of its pupils and it looks after all of them very carefully.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are promoted very successfully.
- The school is very good at checking on its own performance, identifying what it needs to do to improve and taking effective action.

What could be improved

- The role of the governing body in shaping the direction of the school.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning in all subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. It has made very good progress since then. The standards reached by pupils in national tests in English, mathematics and science have not kept pace with the nationally improving trend, but this is due to the particular nature of the school's exceptionally mobile

population, with its often chequered and fragmented educational background. However, very good progress has been made on all the key issues for improvement identified by the last inspection. Standards in music and ICT have risen. There are now appropriate schemes of work which guide teachers' lesson planning in all subjects. Opportunities for independent learning and research have been increased. There is a much higher proportion of very good teaching. The role of subject co-ordinators has developed very well. Assessment information is used much more effectively to help teachers to plan their next steps in teaching.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	D	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science	E	E	E	C	

Standards in English, mathematics and science have generally been low over the past four years, although standards in English were average last year. The school's trend in performance in national tests in Year 6 has not kept pace with the nationally improving trend. The picture in the Year 2 tests in reading, writing and mathematics has been similar to that in Year 6 over the past four years. The generally low standards result from the very high mobility of the school's population and the overall low standards when pupils start at the school. The inspection finds that the school does a very good job in promoting pupils' progress during their time at the school, however short that may be, and however low their starting point. Although standards are currently below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Year 2, they are broadly average in Year 6. Standards in geography and history are above average in both years. In ICT and religious education standards are average. This is also the case in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. The children in the Reception class started school in September or January and many had poorly developed skills, most notably in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Only about half of them are likely to reach expected levels of skill by the end of their time in Reception. The school is very good at setting and reviewing appropriately challenging targets for pupils' achievements. This is a very difficult task, given the mobility of the pupil population. Although targets for Year 6 pupils' performance in national tests in English were exceeded last year, they were missed in mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastically involved in the full range of activities offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very sensibly and responsibly not only in lessons but around the school, at lunch time and in the playground.
Personal development and	Very good. Pupils work and play harmoniously, showing respect for

relationships	others' feelings.
Attendance	Very good, with no unauthorised absence recorded last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is very good overall. There is a very high proportion of very good teaching, particularly in Years 3 – 6. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The basic skills of reading and writing and the use of numbers are taught well. In response to the very good teaching which they receive, pupils learn very well. The school takes particular care to meet the needs of all its pupils. Those who find learning more difficult, including those who have statements of special educational needs, are well supported and helped to make good progress. The most able are challenged to make the most of their capabilities. The teaching has many strengths. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils' learning, particularly pupils who find learning more difficult. Pupils are managed very well, so that they behave very well and develop very positive attitudes to learning. The school is aware that it needs to make more use of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, particularly in Years 3 – 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A good range of learning opportunities is enriched by a very wide range of appropriate activities outside lessons, including sport, which are open to all, including those who have special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The support which these pupils receive both in class and through withdrawal from lessons ensures that they have full access to all learning activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is particularly effective and this is reflected in their very good attitudes and behaviour. The school pays appropriate attention to the need to promote pupils' awareness of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society, and promote racial harmony.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for child protection and welfare are very secure. The school keeps a very careful check on pupils' academic performance and personal development. It uses this information very effectively to ensure that pupils' needs are met. The school has adopted an appropriate policy on race equality.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the	Very good. Appropriate priorities for school improvement and development are clearly identified and understood by the headteacher and other staff with

headteacher and other key staff	management responsibilities, who share a strong and convincing commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. They take effective action in pursuit of their targets.
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How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Statutory responsibilities are met, but the role of the governing body needs improvement. The recent changes in the school's population have meant that many more experienced governors have moved away. Many governors are new to their role, including key figures such as the chair and vice chair. They are very committed, thoughtful and hard working and are undertaking appropriate training. Their involvement in shaping the direction of the school and monitoring its performance is currently too slight.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There are very good procedures for checking on the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' progress and the standards they are reaching are regularly checked and reviewed.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school takes good care to use its money wisely, allocating funds appropriately to support educational priorities. The headteacher is well aware of the principles of best value and applies them carefully in the use of the school's resources, although the role of the governing body in this respect needs improvement.

There is a good number of appropriately trained and qualified teaching and support staff to meet pupils' needs. The accommodation is very good. Learning resources are good overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is very approachable. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. • They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • Their children like school. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework.

The views expressed to the inspection team by parents and carers were very strongly supportive of the school. The inspection supports all these positive views. It finds that the amount of homework is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is an apparent contradiction between the quality of teaching and learning, which is very good overall, and the standards reached, which are generally no better than average, and below in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Year 2. If pupils achieve well, why are standards not higher? Why has the trend in improvement in standards lagged behind the national trend since 1998? Why have pupils generally done worse than most pupils of their age in national tests? The answers to these questions lie in understanding the school's population.
2. The school was established mainly to serve the children of service families, and until last year most of its pupils came from such families, with the civilian population in the minority. Because of this, the school experienced a typical turnover of pupils of over 50 per cent per year. Pupils would enter and leave the school at many different points, frequently joining classes other than the Reception class and leaving other than at the end of Year 6. Some stayed for only brief periods of time, making it more difficult for the school to have much effect on their progress, even given good teaching. Many of these pupils had already attended a number of different schools when they joined Sandlings, often overseas. It is not unknown for pupils to have attended five schools already by the time they come to Sandlings. Records of attainment and progress passed on by previous schools are of variable quality and sometimes of limited usefulness in helping the school to identify pupils' needs. Because of their very unsettled background, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding when they come to the school have been very variable, but generally below average. The current Reception year children also had levels of personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills which were below average when they started school and in a few cases, well below average.
3. Pupils who join the school part way through the year may have difficulties settling in, getting to know others, forming friendships and learning about the school's routines and expectations. They may be emotionally unsettled by the move, both at home and in school, and this can affect their learning and progress. Such turbulence affects not only those who move on or join the school, but also those who stay but perhaps lose close friends and quickly have to make new ones. All this affects learning and progress and holds down standards.
4. The significant change to the school's population which has resulted from the withdrawal of most service families from the base last year has not yet done much to help stabilise the situation, although the school hopes for more stability in the future. There was massive disruption to the school last year as almost half the pupils moved away and were not replaced. The civilian population, which is now in the majority, has not yet brought much stability to the school's roll, as these pupils have not yet been in the school for a full year and there is uncertainty about how long they will stay. Some housing on the base has been let on a temporary basis, some of it on six monthly contracts.
5. Against this background, pupils achieve well taking the school as a whole, and particularly well in Years 3 – 6. They do well compared with what might reasonably be expected of them. This is because the school takes great care to identify and meet all its pupils' learning needs, whatever their starting point, and however long they may stay

at the school. This enables teachers to set pupils appropriately challenging targets and plan their lessons carefully so that work is matched to the needs and capabilities of individuals. Great care is taken to identify and meet the needs of those who find learning more difficult for a variety of reasons, including those who have Statements of special educational needs. The most able are set appropriately stimulating work which encourages them to make the most of their potential. The information which teachers gather from their initial assessments of pupils' attainment on entry is regularly updated in order to check that good progress is being maintained. Targets are adjusted as appropriate. Another important contribution to pupils' achievement comes from the very good attitudes to learning which the school promotes and pupils' very good behaviour. With a positive, enthusiastic attitude to their lessons and sensible, co-operative behaviour, pupils work hard and learn well.

6. There is evidence that some pupils are reaching levels beyond those expected nationally. For example, in Year 6 about a third of the very small group of pupils is performing beyond expectations in English and mathematics, a proportion similar to that usually found nationally. Their writing is varied and interesting. Meaning is communicated in a range of different ways. They use an imaginative range of vocabulary and most of their spelling is accurate. Punctuation is used accurately and their handwriting is mature, joined-up and fluent. These pupils are confident with numbers, for example accurately working out the equivalence of decimal numbers and fractions. They measure angles using a protractor and calculate the sum of angles round a point. Their reading skills are above average. They read accurately, making very few errors and correcting themselves when they do make a mistake. They enjoy poetry as well as a wide range of novels and read non-fiction books for information and pleasure. They are able to talk about a number of different children's authors and identify a favourite author, giving clear reasons for their preference.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

7. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are eager to come into school at the start of the day. They move around the school calmly and with purpose. Pupils are keen to help visitors and delight in showing them their own work. Pupils concentrate very well, show interest, reflect on what they do and involve themselves fully in the wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities the school provides. Pupils are most enthusiastic to get as much out of school as possible. Teachers ensure that lessons and other activities are interesting, challenging, good humoured and well paced, which leads to pupils enjoying their learning. This was seen for example, in a very good Year 5/6 swimming lesson at the local baths, where particularly good attitudes to learning were seen, with pupils excitedly and enthusiastically developing their swimming skills. Again, in a whole school assembly, pupils displayed very good attitudes to work, and the recognition that such attitudes are much appreciated by the school and are celebrated. Pupils are very happy at school. It is a friendly place in which to work. They are clear about the way they should behave and they take a great deal of pride in their work. Pupils co-operate and work very well together. They are keen to answer questions and are not afraid to contribute and test out their own ideas. This was seen for instance, in a good personal, social and health education lesson in Year 4 where pupils were very confident in talking about their experiences of the inspection. Groups of pupils spoken with during the inspection were articulate, considered questions thoughtfully, sensibly and were well able to put their point of view.
8. Behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school, at playtime and lunchtime. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There were many examples of very good

behaviour seen in lessons in Years 3 to 6. Because of good organisation and supervision this very good behaviour was maintained at playtime, when pupils had to stay in school because of rain. There were no permanent exclusions of pupils during the last school year. The school has a behaviour policy which is most effective. This is well supported by simple, clear school rules. It has clear procedures for improving unsatisfactory behaviour, including bullying, which also involves parental support. There are rewards for pupils who are well behaved. Pupils are very aware of the behaviour expected of them and all staff in the school have high expectations of good behaviour. Pupils are clear about reporting procedures and have confidence that appropriate action will be taken should bullying occur. No oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, racism or sexism, was observed in the inspection week. Pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They are polite. The vast majority of parents who contributed to the questionnaire or to the parents meeting, said that pupils are well behaved, and inspection evidence supports this view.

9. Personal development is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to develop the personal attributes of all its pupils. Pupils show initiative and are happy to take responsibility. They respond well to the good range of jobs and responsibilities that they are given and eagerly carry them out. The older pupils notice what needs to be done and do it. In all lessons, pupils are encouraged to answer questions and develop ideas. They are fully involved in the daily routines of the school and help each other, are kind and treat each other with respect. They take part in assemblies, where pupils from all age groups confidently explain and demonstrate their work to the whole school, for example persuasive writing, art work and action rhymes. Pupils are encouraged to perform some of their music for the whole school. They make most significant gains in confidence as they get older and move up through the school. It is clear that the school tries to live out its simple philosophy, displayed for all pupils to see, that, "No-one is good at everything, but everyone is good at something."
10. Pupils form very good, constructive relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults. They work well together, play well together and no instances of exclusion from activities were observed. All are provided with the opportunity to be fully included and integrated into all aspects of school life, both in lessons and beyond. They respect differences between individuals and understand the feelings of others very well.
11. Pupils reflect on, and have a good understanding of the effect of their actions on others. Personal, social, health and citizenship education, whole-class discussions and assemblies all provide many good opportunities for pupils to think about issues of importance to them, such as friendship, helping others, kindness, feelings and the difference between right and wrong.
12. Attendance is very good, being well above the national average. Unauthorised absences are below the national average. Truancy is unheard of. Pupils arrive on time for lessons and no lateness was seen during the inspection. Registration is very efficient and recording is accurate. This results in a prompt start being made and pupils are very quickly into their work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is better than it was at the time of the last inspection and it is better than that usually found when primary schools are inspected. This means that pupils learn very well. More than eight in every ten lessons seen during the inspection were at least good. More than four in ten were very good. Teaching and therefore learning are at their best in Years 3 to 6, where two thirds of lessons seen were very good. The analysis of a large sample of pupils' work bears out the judgement that the quality of teaching is very good overall. It shows, for example, that teachers take great care over marking pupils' work, giving them lots of good quality feedback on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. It also shows that pupils work very productively, covering a lot of ground in the course of each term.
14. Teachers make good use of the information which they gather about pupils' progress and the standards they have reached in order to plan carefully to meet their learning needs and promote their continuing achievement. This is true of all ability levels and needs. Whatever their starting point, all pupils are helped to make good progress. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning in class and sometimes through withdrawal from class in small groups or individually. They often work with pupils who find learning more difficult. Working to the teachers' lesson plans, they ensure that pupils, including those with statements of special educational needs, receive help and support in overcoming their difficulties, so that they experience full opportunities to learn and make progress. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson for example, a small group of less capable pupils was very effectively supported by a teaching assistant who helped them to read and then tackle the simple problems which they were to solve. As a result, they all made very good progress, so that by the end of the lesson they could work out the missing number in a simple equation. The carefully planned work and very good quality support which they received made a positive contribution not only to their learning, but also to the development of positive attitudes and self confidence.
15. In the same lesson, the needs of the most able were equally well met. The teacher had planned an appropriately challenging problem solving activity for this group. After a short period of whole-class teaching and discussion, the teacher soon realised that a number of the most able had already grasped the point and were ready to move on. She responded appropriately, sending this group off from the class to get on problem solving independently and devising their own problems for others to solve. The teacher later subdivided groups in order to ensure the best possible match of work to pupils' needs, and an appropriate level of challenge for all.
16. Pupils' strongly positive attitudes to learning, their enthusiasm and very good behaviour make an important contribution to their learning. Pupils develop very good attitudes and behave very well because of strengths in the teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic because teachers and other staff are enthusiastic and lively. They plan imaginative work which makes lessons interesting, so that pupils want to learn. They also manage their classes very skilfully, building very good relationships with pupils, and maintain good discipline and order. In the orderly atmosphere established, pupils can concentrate and get on and learn. In an art and design lesson in one of the Year 1/2 classes, pupils were very well managed as they went outside to look at natural materials which they might use to create a sculpture. The lesson was interesting and captured their imagination, so that they were soon enthusiastically and sensibly creating their sculptures, co-operating very well together and relating what they were doing to what they had already learned about the sculptor Andy Goldsworthy. Teachers make it clear that they expect high standards of behaviour. They set a good example, treating all pupils fairly and with respect, with an equal emphasis on the contributions of

boys and girls and all ability levels. Pupils are praised regularly for their good effort and achievement.

17. There are few weaknesses in teaching. However, teaching and learning could be improved by making better use of ICT to support pupils' learning in all subjects, particularly in Years 3 and 4. There are some examples of the good use of ICT, for example as pupils in Year 6 produce persuasive writing in English lessons, making very effective use of multi-media presentations. However, ICT use is patchy. Despite some good work in English, in mathematics the use of ICT is insufficient. Sometimes the use which is made of ICT is inappropriate and does not contribute anything much to pupils' learning. This was seen for example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 1, when a small group of pupils worked at an undemanding task which was more appropriate to much younger pupils.

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

18. The curriculum meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It provides pupils with very good quality learning opportunities that prepare them well for the next stage of their education. There has been very good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection. It is now appropriately planned in line with the latest national guidance, including that for the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers, and this is well used. Good opportunities are now provided to extend pupils' independent learning skills. They have many good opportunities to use some of their skills in reading, writing, number and ICT in the other subjects. There have been good improvements in the provision for ICT, although the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects has not yet been sufficiently developed. The school has rightly placed an emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. It recognises the need now to review the allocation of time to subjects and how this is timetabled.
19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The support given within classes allows pupils with special educational needs to enjoy full access to the complete range of learning opportunities provided and to all activities outside lessons. Within literacy, the support is relevant to their particular needs, and teaches them the skills that help them to access the full curriculum. Where such pupils are withdrawn from classes to work on their individual targets, teaching assistants provide well-structured activities that help pupils to achieve them.
20. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education, including sex and relationships education and drug education. There is an appropriate scheme of work which is followed throughout the school and weekly lessons are timetabled for all classes. The police run a programme on drug mis-use for Year 5/6 pupils, and the school is currently reviewing its resources for sex and relationships education. Further provision is made within different subject areas, for example science and religious education, and through assembly themes.
21. The curriculum is enriched by the very good provision of activities which take place outside lessons, for example at lunch times and after school, and include pupils of all ages and abilities. Pupils take part in many different sporting activities and gymnastics. They are able to practise computer skills through a lunchtime computer club and take part in gardening and art and craft activities. Provision is made for musical tuition, including guitar, violin and flute, for which a fee is charged. Visitors to the school, such

as musicians and theatre groups, and visits to museums, farms and other places of interest further enhance the curriculum.

22. The school has established good links with the local secondary school, the local child care centre and a local playgroup. These partnerships help to ensure a positive introduction to the school for the children starting in the Reception class and a smooth transfer to the local high school at the age of eleven. Year 6 pupils visit the high school for a mathematics and science day. There are also good sporting links. Pupils from the high school organise five-a-side football and an athletics tournament for local schools. The special educational needs co-ordinators from Sandlings and the high school meet to ensure that records and information are passed over so that support can be continued.
23. There are satisfactory links with the community that contribute to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils use the local area in their studies, for example in geography. A link has been established with a local newspaper that has helped pupils understand the role of this medium and it has contributed to the development of their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The school was chosen to perform a musical and dance item at a local concert hall, based on the burial of an Anglo Saxon king at nearby Sutton Hoo. At the time of the inspection pupils were excitedly preparing to perform with other local schools in a concert at the Snape Maltings.
24. There is very good overall provision for pupils' personal development and it has improved since the last inspection.
25. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The development of pupils' self-esteem is central to the school's ethos, and is strongly evident in teaching where pupils are praised and encouraged in their learning. A weekly assembly celebrates personal achievements in a way that clearly raises self-esteem and individual spirits. Assemblies are special occasions that are well planned and prepared, and provide good moments for reflection and prayer.
26. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. Staff provide good role models and reinforce pupils' growing awareness of right and wrong through their relationships with pupils and the successful implementation of the school's behaviour policy. Pupils discuss and agree their own rules for classroom conduct. Assemblies, personal, social and health education and religious education lessons provide good opportunities to discuss moral issues.
27. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils have day-to-day responsibilities, for example giving out materials and tidying away. Older pupils have responsibilities around the school that are taken seriously. For example, they help in assemblies, organise playground equipment, help with younger pupils and welcome visitors. The importance of these responsibilities is shown in the self-assessments pupils make of these roles. Visits and community activities provide opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills away from school. The importance given to charitable fund raising, for example the planning and preparation for red nose day, helps to develop a very good awareness of people who are less fortunate.
28. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' cultural development. The school provides a curriculum that helps pupils to develop an understanding and appreciation of their own culture, through subjects such as history, art, music and literature. This provision is appropriately reinforced through visits to museums and other places of interest. Sound provision is made for pupils to learn about some of the customs, beliefs and practices

of a range of other cultural traditions, for example through geography and religious education. The books in school have been checked to ensure that they reflect appropriately the ethnic and cultural diversity of society. However, the school is aware that more could be done to better prepare pupils for life in an increasingly diverse wider community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
30. There is an appropriate health and safety policy, which demonstrates commitment to health and safety and sets out a good range of suitable procedures. An example of this was seen in the regard paid to the health and safety of pupils whilst travelling to the swimming baths by coach and during their time at the swimming baths. Another example is the care taken at the start of physical education lessons to ensure adequate warm-up exercise. Risk assessment is effective, as a result of regular inspections of the school by management and governors, who have a health and safety working group. There is an appropriate medication policy. First aid procedures are satisfactory, with trained staff readily available. Accident reporting is satisfactory and meets requirements. If there is an accident involving a pupil, there are effective procedures for gaining rapid access to treatment. The school does all it reasonably can to ensure the health and safety of its pupils. Day-to-day working practices ensure that pupils and staff are protected from harm.
31. The school provides a most secure, caring and welcoming environment for all its pupils. It works consistently and with determination to secure the best interests of all its pupils, including those with a disability, to safeguard their welfare and promote their development. Staff know the pupils in their care individually and show genuine interest in their welfare, which results in very good relationships. This ensures that all can work and play in a safe, caring, secure environment. Good supervision of pupils during playtime, lunchtime, before and after school and the end-of-day collection arrangements make a most effective contribution to the health and safety of pupils.
32. There is a designated person for child protection issues, who has been fully trained. Agreed child protection procedures are fully understood and closely followed. Pupils causing concern are carefully monitored and there are appropriate and effective links with the relevant agencies and those with parental responsibility. Child protection has a high profile and the school ensures that this issue is handled sensitively and effectively. An example of this is the great care and effectiveness with which the school controls and protects children when they are accessing the Internet, ensuring that they do not have access to any unsuitable or offensive material. Staff are well aware of what to do if they suspect or have disclosed to them any concern that an individual pupil may need protection. It is clear that the school works in the very best interests of all its pupils to safeguard their welfare and promote their development.
33. There are very good procedures to promote, monitor and improve attendance. Very good procedures are in place to communicate with parents on matters of attendance and reasons for any absence.
34. The school has very good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate oppressive behaviour including bullying. Teaching and non-teaching staff, including teaching assistants and midday supervisory assistants, are consistent in applying the school behaviour policy and rules in lessons, around the school and at

playtime and lunchtime. There is good supervision in lessons and at playtime and lunchtime. Pupils are fully aware of the school's expectations of good behaviour and there is an effective reward and sanction system in place, which is used consistently by all staff. Good behaviour and positive attitudes are recognised in classes and in assemblies and awards are made. Unsatisfactory behaviour is always challenged and appropriate sanctions applied. As appropriate, a few pupils have behaviour targets, which are monitored with the aim of effecting improvements in their behaviour. The school hosts and supports an innovative, weekly behaviour therapy counselling session led by a visiting counsellor and attended by a small number of pupils who need help with behavioural difficulties, and their parents.

35. There are very good procedures to monitor and support the personal development of pupils. They are very effective because they are based on the teachers' detailed knowledge of individual pupils. Information is used to develop the personal attributes of pupils such as confidence, initiative, taking responsibility, social skills, moral skills and the making of choices. Pupils' personal attributes are recognised with rewards. Personal, health and social education opportunities, circle time and other curriculum opportunities make a positive impact on personal development in areas such as healthy living, drug education, sex and relationships education and good citizenship. A good personal, social and health education lesson was observed in Year1/2, where pupils were thinking about what makes a good friend. They explored their feelings and reflected on what it means to be lonely. They were understanding the consequences of anti-social behaviour and developing skills to be effective in relationships. Such opportunities ensure that pupils become increasingly independent, self confident and knowledgeable about themselves and healthy and safe living. The older ones are beginning to understand what it means to be a good citizen.
36. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. The school analyses pupils' performance in national tests in English and mathematics taken in Years 2 and 6, in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses and identify what needs to be done to bring about improvement and raise standards. This includes setting suitably challenging work for groups of pupils of different ability in each class and the provision of extra literacy support for small groups of pupils who need to improve their skills. The results of tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 are also analysed and used, as are pupils' termly reading and spelling scores and other assessments. As a result of verbal feedback, most pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sound knowledge of their own learning, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a very good knowledge of their own learning. The marking policy is generally used constructively to help pupils to improve their performance, particularly in English and mathematics. At its best, it helps pupils to recognise what they do well and how they can improve their performance. It is less effective when it is confined to ticks and comments which do not include guidance on how to improve.
37. The use of assessment information to help teachers to plan their lessons is good. Teachers and teaching assistants keep good records to track pupils' academic development. They know the pupils well and have precise information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Pupils' progress in individual lessons and units of work is taken into account in teachers' planning and support is directed effectively to those who need it most. Assessment is used to predict future performance in English and mathematics and to take effective action. The school uses its assessment procedures well to match work to pupils' needs. It provides appropriate work for average and above average pupils and pupils with special educational needs. The school builds effectively on its records and assessment procedures in identifying gifted and talented pupils in all areas of the curriculum. It provides them with suitably challenging work and

opportunities for independent learning in class and supports them through extra-curricular activities in mathematics, music and sport.

38. In addition, the school has good procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs and providing them with specific support. It recognises the need to identify difficulties as early as possible. The assessment of children on entry to the Reception class effectively highlights specific needs. All available information is used in setting and reviewing appropriate targets for each pupil, tracking their progress and providing support to those who need it. Appropriate individual education plans are in place and these are used effectively to guide teaching, and monitor progress. Key staff are aware of the contents of pupils' statements of special educational needs and are able to contribute to the reviews that take place. Teaching assistants give very good support to pupils with specific needs and ensure that they are able to take an active part in lessons. They assist the teacher in monitoring pupils' progress. The results are used to plan for individual pupil learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents have very positive views of the school. They are pleased with the improvements the school has made in recent years, for example in the provision for ICT. The school has a valued position within the community. Many parents spoken to said that they thought very highly of the school.
40. Parents and carers are very satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of what the school provides and achieves. They find the school very approachable, ready to listen and help if they have a question or concern. They say that the school is well led and managed and that the teaching is good. They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on and their children like coming to school. In their view, behaviour at the school is good. All these views are supported by inspection evidence.
41. The quality, relevance and usability of the information provided by the school to parents and carers are good. This is supported by class letters, other school information and regular school newsletters, which are most informative. The school prospectus is informative and meets requirements. Parents spoken to during the inspection week agreed that they understood what was going on in the school.
42. Reporting on the progress of pupils who have special educational needs is good. Most parents of pupils with special educational needs are supportive, involved and attend the review meetings. The reporting on progress for other pupils is very good. Annual reports to parents are outstanding and describe achievement, progress and effort clearly, with reference to national averages, in such a way as to be particularly helpful for parents. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Individual targets are set and reports include provision for pupil and parental comment. The school has several opportunities throughout the year for formal meetings with parents where they can discuss their children. There are also sufficient opportunities for parents and carers to have information about learning and the curriculum, for example what goes on in literacy and numeracy lessons.
43. The school very successfully promotes and encourages links with parents and carers. The school is welcoming to parents and carers; an open door policy operates and parents are at ease when approaching teachers. Parents are invited to come to the Friday assembly, which is greatly appreciated by parents and staff equally, and over 90 per cent attendance is common. Staff are readily available to discuss pupils with parents and carers. A number of parents and carers provide help and support in the

life of the school. Parents and carers who help in school are engaged in a range of activities. They are highly valued by the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school has a very committed and successful Parents' Association, which arranges a full programme of events and raises significant funds, which are well used for the benefit of the school, for example in the provision of extra ICT equipment. The Parents' Association additionally organises a school shop three days a week, which makes a significant contribution to funds.

44. The contribution of parents and carers to pupils' learning is good because the vast majority provide effective support, for example in reading and encouraging their children to do their homework. The school has implemented appropriate home-school-pupil agreements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and key staff are very good. This creates an effective and constantly improving school where pupils are motivated and enabled to achieve. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher was said to provide strong and effective leadership. This has clearly continued to be the case since then. The school has fully addressed all the issues for improvement raised by that inspection. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the co-ordinators of the lower and upper school. He has a very clear vision for the future development of the school and inspires the enthusiastic support and commitment of the governing body, the staff, parents and pupils. He leads by example and by taking responsibility, and empowers others to become leaders. He has proved particularly flexible, imaginative and effective in planning to meet the challenges which have resulted and continue to result from important changes in the school's intake and roll over the past year. All teaching staff lead aspects of school improvement and contribute appropriately to the process of school improvement and development planning.
46. The leadership of the school reflects the school's aims and values. It creates a climate for learning, challenges expectations and helps both pupils and staff to achieve success. The action taken to meet the school's targets is proving very effective. Staff, parents and pupils are all aware of the school's vision and strive to live up to it. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed is very good. Together, the headteacher and staff have established a positive and harmonious environment with high expectations, within which staff and pupils can teach and learn successfully.
47. Improvements in teachers' planning and subject knowledge, and in assessment procedures and their use, have been instrumental in raising standards. All staff are trained to identify priorities, set targets for improvement and provide leadership in their areas of responsibility. The short-term improvement plan identifies areas for development and includes time scales and cost implications. The headteacher and governors are aware of the need to produce and work to three-year improvement plan, despite the uncertainties surrounding the future progress of the school.
48. Many members of the governing body are new to their role. They are very supportive of the school and are keen to develop a fuller understanding of their role through attendance at a wide variety of courses. Through further training, they will be better placed to play a more active role in shaping the future direction of the school and monitoring its performance. All governors have a sound understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges that it faces. They play a developing role in strategic

thinking and planning, shaping the direction of the school and monitoring its performance. The headteacher works closely with the governing body and provides regular detailed reports for governing body meetings on curriculum development, standards, trends over time, financial implications and other matters. Governors plan to take on individual responsibility for links with particular subjects or other aspects of the school's work, such as special educational needs. The governors have established the necessary committees to assist them in their work and each committee keeps the full governing body informed through written reports. An appropriate race equality policy is contained within the equal opportunities policy and the governors have produced a draft accessibility plan to ensure that the buildings and grounds are fully accessible to adults and pupils with physical disabilities.

49. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is very good. The school is managed for the benefit of all pupils and their achievements. The very good communication amongst staff, and with governors, parents and pupils is a strength of the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are fully involved in strategic thinking and planning and in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and the taking of effective action. The governing body aims to become increasingly involved. Subject leaders monitor and review their own subject areas. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom by the headteacher, the senior management team and local authority personnel, has proved very effective in raising standards in teaching and learning. The headteacher manages his staff very well. Through their performance management targets, subject leaders are taking an increasingly active role in monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom. Their developing skills in monitoring and evaluating pupils' learning within their areas of responsibility are helping to raise pupils' attainment and progress. Improved planning ensures that pupils' learning builds on what they already know, understand and can do. This has led to good improvement in teaching since the last inspection.
50. There are very good procedures for reviewing the headteacher's and teachers' performance. The governing body appraises the work of the headteacher and sets performance targets for him. The headteacher and senior management team appraise the work of teachers. Teaching assistants participate in training and development opportunities and have developed their expertise in managing initiatives in literacy and numeracy. They give valuable support to pupils with special educational needs. There is a very good programme of induction for teachers and teaching assistants who are new to the school and a comprehensive staff handbook. The school welcomes students on work experience and is keen to become involved in the training of student teachers.
51. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and teaching assistants are very well matched to the demands of the curriculum. This very good provision makes a very good contribution to the quality of education that the school provides and the effectiveness with which pupils are taught and supported. All staff understand their role and the roles of others. There is a co-ordinator for special educational needs. All staff are well trained and experienced and all have very good opportunities for further and on-going professional development. There are good arrangements for introducing new staff to the school's routines. They are valued by each other and work well together as a most effective team. Teaching assistants are involved in the planning of lessons, and learning objectives and attend training with their own class teacher. They are deployed well, and are most effective in the support they provide to those with special educational needs. Staff work in an open, informed and supportive environment.
52. School accommodation is very good. It allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. It significantly enhances pupils' learning. Accommodation is spacious, with wide

corridors, very well maintained, decorated and cleaned to a high standard. The school has good disability provision and access. The accommodation provides a welcoming, stimulating place for pupils to learn and play. It is supplemented by good displays, including pupils' work. There is a useful hall which allows the whole school to be brought together with ease; good quality, well provisioned classrooms; a medical room; very generous hard play areas, and a grassed area which is particularly appreciated by pupils.

53. Resources for learning are good overall. They are of good quality, appropriate for the needs of the curriculum, in good condition and very accessible. Resources for ICT are very much improved since the last inspection, with computers in every classroom and also in a dedicated ICT suite. There is a need to improve the range of programs which can be used to support pupils' learning in the other subjects, particularly in mathematics and science.
54. The management of special educational needs is good and this is a significant factor in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator is ably supported by class teachers, trained teaching assistants and external agencies. The school fulfils its legal responsibilities with regard to special educational needs. The governor with oversight for special educational needs is well informed. She liaises with the co-ordinator on a regular basis and reports back to the governing body. The school works closely with the local high school to which many pupils transfer at 11, in order to ensure the smooth transition of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
55. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The school makes very good use of new technology, for example for managing the budget and keeping track of pupils' progress. All expenditure is systematically budgeted for. The school secretary, with the support of the administrative assistant, manages the school office smoothly and efficiently and extends a warm welcome to visitors to the school. Finances are managed very effectively. Issues highlighted in the most recent audit report have been addressed. There is close liaison with the governing body and the school has ready access to outside expertise in managing its finances. The budget process is managed efficiently and the headteacher keeps the governors fully informed regarding spending levels. The strategic use of resources, including specific funds to support educational priorities such as special educational needs, is very good. The headteacher and governors employ the principles of best value to ensure that the school makes efficient use of all its resources, for example, in the purchase of computers. The governors and staff have a clear sense of educational direction and as a result the school's priorities for development are very appropriate. The governors allocate and agree funds to support the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Financial reports demonstrate careful analysis of spending against aims.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to address the issues for improvement identified in this report, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

1. Develop the role of the governing body in shaping the direction of the school by:
 - Pressing on with the programme of training to inform governors fully of their responsibilities and equip them with the necessary skills to carry them out effectively. (*Paragraph 48*)
 2. Develop the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in all subjects by:
 - Ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained in the application of ICT to support teaching and learning in all subjects, especially English, mathematics and science.
 - Enriching ICT resources as necessary to ensure that the appropriate software is available for use in all subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science, by pupils of all ages. (*Paragraphs 17, 53*)
- *The need to develop further the role of the governing body is a target in the current school development plan.*

The school should also address the following minor issue for improvement:

- Review the allocation of time to the subjects of the curriculum and consider the ways in which links may be made between them.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	19	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	40	44	16	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	123
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	70

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	4.5	School data	0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	14	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	17
	Girls	10	13	12
	Total	23	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (63)	83 (80)	83 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	15
	Girls	8	12	12
	Total	21	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (68)	80 (80)	77 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	10	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (84)	60 (53)	73 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (85)	73 (60)	73 (72)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. The numbers of boys and girls reaching NC level 4 and above have been omitted due to the small numbers of pupils involved.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	108	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	495,812
Total expenditure	515,177
Expenditure per pupil	2,430
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,989
Balance carried forward to next year	17,624

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	113
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	37	4	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	33	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	27	15	0	6
The teaching is good.	75	23	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	42	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	90	10	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	15	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	63	33	2	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	85	15	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	33	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	33	2	0	4

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

57. The children at the Foundation Stage of learning are all taught together in the Reception class. Most transfer from the child care centre nearby in September or January. Of the thirteen children on roll in Reception at the time of the inspection, seven were attending part-time, mornings only.
58. Although a broad range of abilities is represented in this small group of children, a high proportion of the present group started school with poorly developed skills. This is true across the board, but it is most significant in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Spoken language skills are very poor. Their levels of mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world are also poor.
59. The quality of teaching is good, so that the children make good progress in their learning and achieve reasonably well. Lessons are well planned and teachers take care to explain to children in the simplest terms what they will be doing and why. This helps the children to have a sound understanding of their own learning. Teachers and teaching assistants have a good, secure understanding of the National Curriculum as it applies to children of this age. They teach the basic skills of reading and writing and the use of numbers well. The children are encouraged to join in with all activities and 'have a go', even when some are reluctant to do so. Activities are carefully planned to appeal to and meet the learning and development needs of all the children, the boys and girls, the most able and those who find learning and good behaviour more difficult. The deployment of support staff to this class is generous. There is also a good level of helpful volunteer support. The teaching assistants working in Reception are very skilled and give very good quality support, especially to those children who have special educational needs, including those who have statements of special educational needs. However, as a group these children are not likely to reach expected levels of development and skill by the end of their Reception year. This is true of all the areas of learning for children at this stage, except physical development where most children's skills are likely to be about average by the end of their time in Reception. Only about half the children look set to reach expected levels of personal, social and emotional development. The same is true of their language and mathematical skills. At the time of the last inspection, the children in Reception were on course at least to reach expected levels of development by the end of their Reception year. This is not the case at present, due to the very low attainment on entry of the present small group of children.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. The wide range of stimulating activities provided successfully encourages the children to work and play with interest and enthusiasm. This helps them to develop positive attitudes to learning. As they come into school in the morning there are plenty of attractive and interesting things to choose from. These include for example, work at the computer, play in the sand, writing and construction. There are regular opportunities for the children to speak to the class or group with which they are working, for example as they relate their news. This encourages the development of self confidence. Although some children speak happily to the whole class, a majority is reluctant to do so. Some can be coaxed to recount their news only in a whisper and

very briefly, making it clear that they feel very uncomfortable standing up and talking in front of the others.

61. There are good opportunities for the children to develop their awareness of and respect for their own feelings and views and those of others. For example, regular 'circle time' gives the children the chance to sit together and talk about some of their experiences and how these make them feel. They talk about things that make them happy, such as a birthday, and things that make them sad. They are encouraged to think about how they can help others if they are sad or worried.
62. There are many good opportunities for the children to learn to work as part of a group, developing the ability to take turns and share fairly and to appreciate the needs of others. Many activities are carefully planned to promote co-operation, sharing and turn taking. However, many of the children still find this difficult. At times, a few children have great difficulty sharing and taking turns fairly, wanting to dominate certain toys or activities, keeping them to themselves. This level of social development is more commonly seen in much younger children, around the age of three. At such times, it takes all the skill and calm persistence of staff to persuade such children to co-operate.
63. The children are not as independent as most children of this age. One or two of them still need supervision over taking themselves to the toilet, because they have difficulty in behaving appropriately away from the classroom. This means in practice that most of the children are supervised at such times, which is not helpful to the development of their personal independence. Opportunities to develop independence are also missed, for example when staff give more help than is necessary or usual with routines such as putting on aprons for 'messy' work.

Communication, language and literacy

64. There are many regular opportunities for the children to enjoy using language in a variety of different forms. Good use is made of a range of appropriate story books, imaginatively read, to encourage an interest in and enjoyment of books. For example, the children listen to *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, looking at the pictures, joining in and relishing the account of the caterpillar's voracious appetite. They know that print and illustrations carry meaning. They understand that in English we read from the top of the page to the bottom and from the front of a book to the back. Most of the children are beginning to be able to retell a story in the correct order and they are encouraged in this by activities such as sequencing a set of illustrations presented randomly. The listening skills of three or four of the children are poorly developed and they have difficulty sitting still and concentrating, which makes it more difficult for the teacher and the rest of the class.
65. Adults make good use of questioning to encourage the children to develop their speaking skills and extend their vocabulary and ability to describe and explain things clearly. Most of the children still find this difficult, some almost impossible. Questions are often posed carefully in such a way as to invite an extended response, rather than just a single word answer.
66. The children are learning to recognise the names of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. They are encouraged to hear and say the initial and final sounds in words. For example, they sort pictures of things beginning with 'b' or 'h' into two hoops, identifying the initial sounds in words such as *horse* and *boat*. They learn to identify similarities and differences in sounds. For example, they learn that some words sound similar and they enjoy reciting rhymes such as, *Slimy slugs and shiny*

bugs. They identify rhyming words in story books, picking out, for instance, such rhymes as *frog/log* and *peg/leg*.

67. All of the children can read their own name, although a few have only just accomplished this. The system for self-registration when the children first come into class encourages the development of this skill, requiring that they identify their name on a card and affix it to a board in order to indicate their presence. However, other reading skills are less well developed than usual at this age. Few are able to read simple words or sound them out. Only a very small minority is able to read simple stories, using sounds to help them to read. It is unlikely that most children will be able to read much independently by the end of the year.
68. Attainment in writing is similar to that in reading. Most of the children can write their own name with a capital and small letters, although several can manage only the first letter of their name reliably. Most are unlikely to be able to write a few words on their own, starting to make use of punctuation, by the end of their Reception year.

Mathematical development

69. The children have many appropriate opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. They count the numbers 1 to 10 on the 'washing line' and practise counting back several steps, for example from 4 to 1. They attempt to put the numbers from 1 to 20 in order. All the children can recognise the numbers up to nine, mostly consistently and reliably. The other expected mathematical skills are, however, less well developed than is usual at this age. The counting skills of over half of the children are poorly developed. Few can consistently and reliably count up to ten everyday objects. They are learning an appropriate mathematical vocabulary, such as *taller* and *shorter*. For example, they talk about Jack and the giant in the story *Jack and the Beanstalk*, comparing their height, and sort themselves in order of height, from the shortest to the tallest. They use the large construction apparatus to build *tall* and *taller* or *short* and *shorter* towers. They learn the idea of *heavier* and *lighter* by comparing parcels of different size and mass and using a balance to decide which of two vegetables or fruits is heavier, although few had gained a secure grasp of this at the time of the inspection. The children are learning to use words such as *less than* and *more than* and beginning to add and subtract in a practical way. They enjoy singing number songs such as *Ten in the Bed* and *Six Little Speckled Frogs*, learning to relate subtraction to 'taking away'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. The children have many appropriate opportunities to investigate the world around them using all their senses. They enjoy for example, the feel of the play dough as they mould and fashion it to make something that is *light* or *heavy* and compare the feel of wet and dry sand, as they make trails from one end of the sand tray to the other. They remark on the unusual smell of the mixture of yeast and water which they use to make bread rolls. They look closely and observe similarities and differences, for example using a magnifying glass to group insects according to characteristics, such as whether they have wings. There are plenty of appropriate opportunities for the children to choose from a range of suitable materials to build and construct. They use beads and laces, for instance, to make a caterpillar in connection with the story they have been hearing and they make a model with holes in it for the caterpillar to crawl through. The children are developing a sound understanding of some simple geographical ideas. For example, they draw a 'bird's eye view' of the route taken by 'Rosie the hen' in the story *Rosie's Walk* and they make models of some of the natural and made features which she encounters along the way. They start to develop appropriate skills in using the

computer keyboard and mouse and use a tape player sometimes to listen to number rhymes. Computer use soundly contributes to the development of their early reading, writing and number skills, for example as they use the *animated alphabet* program and play number games.

Physical development

71. Good use is made of a spacious, safe outside area to help in the promotion of the children's physical development. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is a range of appropriate large wheeled toys and other apparatus. The children explore the movement of their own body, learning to move with increasing control and co-ordination. They wriggle, walk and bounce around the hall, noticing the changes that occur to their body as they do so. They move imaginatively, for example as they try to move like slugs, snails, spiders and wasps, having looked at a variety of different mini beasts. They are learning to control equipment, such as when they pass a soft ball around the circle from one to the other or balance it on their head, hands or feet. They learn to throw and catch on their own and then with a partner and travel trying to keep in control of the ball. Art and craft activities and writing practice also make a sound contribution to the development of the children's physical skills, for example as they use pencils, crayons, construction apparatus, play dough, sand and water.

Creative development

72. The children have regular opportunities for creative development. They draw and paint, for example drawing pictures to represent parts of a story they have enjoyed and painting their favourite mini beast using textured paint. They paint the caterpillar in the story and the fruit it ate. They paint Jack's beanstalk. They use a variety of different materials to make models, for example using papier maché to make bugs. They sing a number of songs and rhymes and play rhythms, for example clapping out the rhythm of their name and reproducing a clapped rhythm by beating the drum. They enjoy trying to beat out a rhythm on the Gamelan – the large Indonesian percussion instruments – but few are able to keep a regular beat. The home corner role play area makes a sound contribution to the development of the children's imagination and gives them the opportunity to express some of their ideas and feelings, for example as they play out the role of parents and children, 'working' in the 'kitchen', doing the 'ironing' and 'washing up'.

ENGLISH

73. Standards in reading and writing are below average in Year 2. Results in the 2002 national tests in reading were well below the national average and those in writing were below average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress whatever their starting point and achieve well. Boys performed better than girls in 2002, but there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls at the present time. In 2002, 66 per cent of pupils achieved the national standard in reading and 83 per cent in writing. On paper, this represents a decline since the last inspection in both reading and writing, but it is not possible to make a valid comparison, because of the variations in the small cohorts, the rapid turnover of pupils the overall low attainment on entry. There has, in fact, been very good improvement since the last inspection in pupils' progress and achievement due to the very good improvement in teaching.
74. Standards seen in English in Year 6 are average. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 matched the national average. They were very good when

compared with those of pupils who had started from a similar level at the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress and achieve very well. Girls have consistently achieved better than boys over the last three years. Such differences are the result of the gender composition of the small cohorts, but there are no significant differences at the present time. In 2002, 67 per cent of pupils achieved the national standard in English. This maintains the position at the last inspection but, nevertheless, represents very good improvement in view of the school's circumstances.

75. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards are improving. The raising of standards in reading, spelling and writing throughout the school rightly remains a priority. Improved planning and teaching, together with systematic target setting based on more accurate assessment of standards and progress is having a positive effect. This is evident in the improved quality of work in pupils' books, the good progress made by pupils in Year 1/2 and the very good progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 in lessons observed during the inspection.
76. Standards in speaking and listening are similar to those usually found in Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils listen carefully to each other and to adults and respond well to questions and discussions. This was very evident in a lesson in Year 5/6 when pupils listened extremely well to the teacher and each other and were able to assess how well they and others had used commas to embed clauses within sentences, and imaginative vocabulary when forming complex sentences. The good use of questioning by most teachers and the expectation that pupils will use their thinking skills, particularly in Year 5/6, encourages the more reluctant speakers to respond. During daily reading sessions, pupils experience a wide range of carefully selected material, which provides a range of contexts for formal and informal speech. There are planned opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills during class discussions and paired and grouped activities in most subjects. In most lessons, there is a strong emphasis on the use of subject-specific vocabulary when speaking.
77. The current emphasis on reading is having a positive effect on standards and most pupils enjoy books. The use of a structured reading scheme, featuring a controlled vocabulary, in the early stages of reading is helpful, as is the dedication of part of each day to group reading. A more consistent approach to the teaching of the sounds of letters and how they can be used to 'sound out' unfamiliar words is proving beneficial, but many pupils still lack efficient strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words. The books in the school library are used well. Research and referencing skills are taught well in Years 3 to 6, but could usefully be developed from an earlier age. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good use of the Internet for research in history and geography and pupils in Year 5/6 are becoming proficient in skimming and scanning books for information. Gifted and talented and more able pupils are able to appraise a text quickly and effectively. They use their knowledge of word formation and word derivations to construct the meaning of words in context. Older pupils are beginning to analyse how mood, feelings and attitudes are conveyed, using inference and deduction. Many pupils have personal preferences for authors and types of text and express a personal response to literature. They also appreciate the opportunity to borrow books from the school and some pupils belong to local libraries. Most pupils read regularly at home, and parents of younger pupils are supportive in hearing them read each night.
78. The school's focus on writing and the assessment of writing is having a positive effect on standards. Planned opportunities for writing in some other subjects, for instance history and geography, are proving particularly beneficial and could be usefully extended to other subjects. During the inspection week, pupils in Year 1/2 increased

their understanding of the features of story language and learned to write and follow simple instructions. They also developed their ability to build compound words and use them in sentences. Pupils in Year 3 broadened their understanding of the features of instructional writing. Year 4 pupils made very good gains in their ability to spell well, due to the emphasis placed on accurate spelling. They used powerful adjectives, in their speech and writing, such as *dense, gloomy, frowning, threatening* and *oppressive* in reference to a forest. Pupils in Year 5/6 developed their skill in using complex sentences, with appropriate grammatical sequence, connectives and punctuation. Most pupils enjoy reading and writing poetry using different poetic forms, rhyme and figurative language. Pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 wrote a variety of poems during Book Week, based on animals. Years 5 and 6 develop their understanding of poetry through reading longer classical poems. They particularly enjoy *Hiawatha*. During an 'achievement assembly', pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrated their highly effective audio-visual presentations using persuasive language, to encourage pupils to buy *Ralex* bath products to relax, and ice-cream in hot weather. They made very good use of ICT in creating these presentations. One girl could not fail to persuade people, with her description of an ice lolly, entitled *A chocolate ballerina*. She advertised it thus, "This ice lolly is smoothly enrobed in velvety chocolate and is individually wrapped in a ballerina dress."

79. The school places strong emphasis on the systematic teaching and learning of spelling. Pupils' spelling is improving as a result. By the end of Year 2, most pupils spell some common monosyllabic words accurately and make sensible and plausible attempts at spelling longer, polysyllabic words. The learning of weekly spellings has improved standards in Years 3 to 6. In Years 5 and 6, there is clear evidence of the accurate use of a range of spelling patterns, on the part of most pupils. They increasingly use powerful verbs to describe emotions and actions when writing a story, and many of their vocabulary choices are adventurous and effective. There is the potential to use ICT more in the younger classes to reinforce correct spelling and improve writing.
80. Appropriate emphasis is placed on neat handwriting and presentation. Handwriting is practised regularly, with the result that it becomes increasingly legible, correctly formed and neatly presented as pupils move through the school. The weekly spellings learned by pupils, together with regular assessment of their spelling skills and the use of these assessments to inform future planning is having a positive effect on pupils' achievements. Most parents support their children in learning their weekly spellings.
81. The National Literacy Strategy is implemented well. It provides the structure for the progressive development of pupils' reading, writing and word level skills. Investment in a range of good quality resources has helped teachers to use the strategy to full effect. Early literacy support is provided in Years 1 and 2, additional literacy support in Year 3 and further literacy support in Year 5. Learning intentions are helpfully shared with pupils in each lesson and this helps them to understand what they are doing and why. Appropriate opportunities are provided for them to assess what they have learned. Pupils transfer their reading, writing and spelling skills well to other areas of the curriculum. Marking is generally good. It recognises the strengths of pupils' work and, at its best, indicates the next steps that pupils should take in order to improve further. Literacy is developed in a wider sense, for example, when pupils take part in school productions. It contributes to pupils' spiritual development through the expression of their thoughts and feelings, in speech and writing and their appreciation of the writings of others. Class discussions and group and paired work aid pupils' social development. The study of texts from a range of countries and cultures enhances cultural development. Moral issues are appropriately considered as they arise.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The strengths of teaching are teachers' energy and enthusiasm, high expectations and their use of assessment to enable them to meet the needs of all pupils, including average pupils, the most able, gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs. There is a good level of challenge for all. The strong focus on basic skills, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is a major factor in pupils' achievement. The good management of pupils in Years 1 and 2, and very good management in Years 3 to 6 promotes very good attitudes and behaviour, which combined with the very good relationships that prevail, are key factors in pupils' good learning in Years 1 and 2 and very good learning in Years 3 to 6. Effective teaching methods in Years 1 and 2 and very effective methods in Years 3 to 6, engage and retain pupils' interest and concentration and they are motivated to apply considerable intellectual effort to their work. Time and resources are used very well. Teaching assistants provide very good support, particularly to pupils who experience difficulties. Regular homework is used to consolidate and extend the work in the lesson. Through the use of targets, which are regularly reviewed, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sound knowledge of their own learning and progress and pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a very good knowledge of their learning. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding, in Years 1 and 2 and very good gains in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' learning is effectively enriched by book weeks and visiting authors and poets who conduct workshops.
83. Subject leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and gives very good support to colleagues. She has produced a clear and helpful policy, and has a very strong commitment to raising pupils' achievement. She regards English as a key to further improvement across the curriculum and displays a very clear vision for the development of English skills in other subjects. Very effective whole-school systems have been established, which reflect the school's aims and values and ensure that there is a strong emphasis on basic skills, and equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
84. Areas for future development include developing pupils' thinking, reasoning, enquiry and questioning skills at all levels, involving pupils more in assessing their own performance and using ICT more to develop pupils' skills.

MATHEMATICS

85. Standards are average in Year 6, but they are below average in Year 2. The situation in Year 2 is similar to that found last summer when pupils took national tests. Their performance then was very low, with a lower than average proportion reaching nationally expected levels and only about two in ten reaching higher levels, compared with a national figure of about a third. A high proportion of pupils is still operating at a level a year or more behind expectations for Year 2 - almost a half - and few pupils are performing beyond expected levels, only one or two. Standards in Year 6 are better overall than they were in the most recent national tests, when they were very low. However, there is a very small number of pupils in Year 6 this year and there is a fair proportion of low attainment as well as high, tending to balance things out and give an overall average picture. About the same proportion of pupils is performing at the lower level of the National Curriculum as that at the higher level – that is to say, about a third. Standards are different from those found last year, and at the last inspection, because of the very fluctuating nature of the school's population, which means that no two year groups are comparable. Standards are not higher, despite good teaching overall and very good teaching in Years 3 – 6, because pupils generally start from a low base and

do not consistently spend long enough at the school to make enough progress and catch up. While they are there, they make good progress and achieve well – very well in Years 3 – 6 – in response to the good quality teaching.

86. Pupils in Year 2 spend a lot of their time developing their skills in the use of numbers, but this is not at the expense of other work, for example on shape, space and measures. A particularly strong emphasis is placed on giving pupils opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in practical problem solving activities. This is extremely valuable in developing mathematical understanding and it also helps pupils to see the relevance of mathematics to real life, so encouraging interest and enthusiasm. For example, pupils work out how much change to give when shopping, counting out, for instance, 2p change when a 5p coin has been offered for an item costing 3p.
87. Pupils in Year 6 are very productive, getting through a great deal of work in the course of the year. The coverage of the full curriculum is very thorough, with an appropriate emphasis on number work but with a good representation of shape, space and measures and data handling. Again, very great importance is placed on the application of mathematics to real life problems, as it is throughout the school. For example, pupils work out how much fencing a farmer needs to fence a particular piece of land, so applying their knowledge and understanding of how to calculate perimeter. Most pupils work at the expected level, for example at written multiplication and division. They work out fractions of quantities, such as one fifth of £4 = 80p. They add and subtract decimals to two decimal places. Pupils collect data and compile frequency charts to represent them. They know about the properties of two-dimensional shapes, such as a parallelogram and rhombus. They measure angles to the nearest degree, using a protractor. There are some appropriate opportunities for pupils to use some of their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 analyse census data from the nineteenth century in connection with their study of the Victorians in history. In geography, they produce graphs to illustrate housing development trends and the increase in population in nearby Rendlesham. In Year 4 pupils gather and analyse data from a local survey. They tabulate their findings and represent them using decimals and fractions.
88. Teaching is good overall and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers manage their classes well, keeping good order, ensuring that pupils behave well so that they can all get on, work hard and do their best. They plan lessons carefully, making good use of national guidance on the teaching of numeracy. A particularly strong feature of the teaching is the way in which it meets the learning needs of all the pupils. Those who find learning more difficult, including those with Statements of special educational needs, are well supported in lessons and helped to make good progress. The most able are challenged to do their best and make the most of their abilities. Where particular gifts are identified, pupils are given good opportunities to excel, for example through extension activities in Year 4. The marking of pupils' work is good, and very good in Years 5 and 6. It gives pupils lots of very helpful advice on what they need to do in order to improve their work. Pupils are set challenging targets which are reviewed termly. The only significant weakness is that teachers do not make enough use of ICT to support pupils' learning. There is some use, but not as much as there might be, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
89. The leadership and management of the subject are of good quality. The subject co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of standards in the subject and why they are as they are. She is aware of the need now to develop the use of ICT and that the improvement of software resources and some further staff training will be required to support this development. The co-ordinator keeps a very close and effective check on the quality of teaching and learning, through a good programme of monitoring

classroom practice and teachers' planning. There is room to develop the regular scrutiny and analysis of pupils' work.

SCIENCE

90. Standards in science are below average in Year 2 but in Year 6 they are average. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well during their time at Sandlings. Those who have special educational needs, including those with statements of special needs, are well supported and set work which is carefully planned to meet their needs, so that they make good progress and achieve well. Similarly, the most able are suitably challenged by the work set and helped to make the most of their potential. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. There are now more planned opportunities for investigative science that help pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding.
91. In Year 2, pupils recognise that living things grow and reproduce. From their work on bean plants, they begin to understand the factors that affect plant growth. They observe the basic properties of materials and sort them accordingly, but do not link these properties to any particular purpose. They identify a range of sources of light and sound, and begin to understand how sounds are made and shadows formed. Pupils communicate their findings mostly by charts and drawings. There is very little evidence that shows that pupils are recording and comparing the outcomes of investigations through the measurement of results in a way that they might be expected to do by Year 2.
92. In Year 6, pupils name the main parts of a plant. The most capable know how plants make their own food and talk about this using scientific terms such as *photosynthesis*. Pupils recognise the feeding relationships between plants and animals in various habitats and the food chains that exist. They know that materials can be classified into solids, liquids and gases; higher attaining pupils understand how the surface area of liquids affects the rate of evaporation. By investigating shadows, pupils explain how light is reflected and shadows formed. Their past work shows good opportunities to make investigations involving careful observations, measurement, analysis and recording. Most pupils understand fair testing, but many are uncertain of the link between prediction, investigation and conclusion. Investigations tend to be teacher directed, with too few opportunities, particularly for the most able, to plan and carry out their own.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, judged by the lessons seen and the work in pupils' books. It is better in Years 3 to 6 where it is sometimes very good. Where very good teaching occurs, teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan activities that encourage careful observation and investigation. For example, in Year 5/6, a well planned and prepared lesson enabled pupils to investigate mixing different materials with water. A concise introduction let pupils quickly move onto the investigation. Careful questioning by the teacher and teaching assistant encouraged pupils to observe closely and to draw conclusions. In some other lessons questioning and discussion were not always rigorous enough, either to further pupils' understanding and their use of scientific vocabulary, or to provide assessment opportunities for teachers. Pupils' work is generally well presented and well marked. Teachers' comments often refer to what it was intended that pupils should learn and inform pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Lessons are managed well, resulting in good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils work well together in groups; discussion within these groups helps pupils to clarify their ideas and progress in their learning.

94. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to use and apply some of their reading and writing skills for instance, as they label their diagrams and write careful accounts of animal habitats. Good use is made of mathematical skills through investigative science, where results are measured, recorded and compared. For example, Year 4 pupils have measured and recorded the number of newtons needed to move a brick over different surfaces. There is too little evidence of the use of ICT to support learning, apart from the use of a computer microscope.
95. Planning for lessons is appropriately based on national guidelines that help to ensure the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers assess pupils after each unit of study against key learning objectives, and this is starting to be used to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching. However, lesson planning and assessment do not always take sufficient account of the wide range of abilities and needs, particularly in mixed age classes. Individual target levels are not set to better inform planning and ensure the best possible match of work to pupils' learning needs, particularly those of the most able.
96. The management of science is sound. The subject co-ordinator checks on standards and the smooth progression of pupils' learning through collecting in and analysing samples of pupils' work. A portfolio of work is helpfully being built up in order to keep a check on standards and progress. Although it is planned on a rolling programme, there has not been any recent monitoring of teaching and learning with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. The need to review both the allocation of time to the subject, and how this is timetabled, so that teaching and learning can be more effective, has been recognised. Good use is made of the local environment. The school is developing an environmental garden with bird and bat boxes and other planned habitats; farm visits help pupils to find out about animal life cycles and different food chains. A science day has been held to help raise pupils' interest in the subject. A science club, run for part of the year, adds to the provision.

ART AND DESIGN

97. In both Years 2 and 6 standards in art and design are average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress due to the high quality of teaching and learning. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning and pupils' work have all been monitored and evaluated, with the result that teaching has improved and better use is made of sketchbooks.
98. Pupils in Year 2 successfully experiment with various materials, including those for three-dimensional work. They achieve expected standards in observational drawing, using viewfinders and looking at the detail in pictures and photographs to develop their skills.
99. By the time pupils have reached Year 6 they have used a sufficient range of materials and techniques, for example mod-roc and clay in three-dimensional work, and pencil, charcoal, pastel and paint in their pictures. Their sketchbooks have been used well to record ideas, for example when developing clay work from environmental sketches and experimenting with colour tones. They discuss their own and others' work with a view to improvement.
100. Judged from the lessons seen and from examples of work displayed and in sketchbooks, teaching overall is very good. Lessons are well planned and prepared so that a good pace is maintained. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this

enables them to create stimulating lessons that capture pupils' interest, engender enthusiasm and promote good learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 used natural objects from the environment, which they had collected, to create sculptures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. Throughout lessons pupils have good opportunities to view and discuss each other's work with a view to improving their own. The very good relationships in classes enable pupils to be critical and to accept criticism. Pupils work very well together in groups, sharing ideas and materials. Very good support is given throughout lessons by teachers and teaching assistants. Good questioning and positive encouragement help to develop the skills and understanding of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

101. Pupils make satisfactory use of art and design to support learning in other subjects. For example pupils in Years 1 and 2 used collage to create figures from the Katie Morag story which they had been studying in geography, and drew plants carefully in science. In Years 5 and 6 pupils draw different types of architectural columns as part of their work on ancient Greece. Good use is made of digital photography both to gather ideas and to provide a record of work undertaken. Some further use is made of ICT through the use of paint programs.
102. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. There has been supportive monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. As a result of this teachers' planning for lessons has been reviewed and now follows national guidelines, adapted to the needs of the school. Although skills are well taught, there is a need to develop assessment procedures further to take better account of the development of pupils' skills. The need to review both the allocation of time to the subject, and how this is timetabled, so that teaching and learning can be more effective, has also been recognised. Art and craft days have been held that have helped to raise pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. The standards of work seen in both Year 2 and Year 6 are average, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout the school. In Year 5/6, where the quality of teaching and learning is very good, pupils make better progress.
104. In Year 2, pupils use a range of appropriate tools and equipment in their construction work. They investigate different ways of joining materials, for example when making Joseph's coat, and ways of decorating and patterning cloth, such as tie and dye, for this product. They evaluate these coats, thinking whether they could make any improvement both in design and construction. In food technology, pupils have compared and tasted different vegetables after cooking, and sampled fruits before making a fruit salad.
105. In Year 6, pupils have designed and made model shelters. They have made a thorough investigation of materials, testing them both for strength and water-resistant qualities. They have found out how materials can be strengthened, for example, by folding. In food technology, they have designed, made and packaged biscuits, using a class survey and a thorough investigation of manufactured biscuits to inform their planning. Their detailed investigation and modification of planning shows that a small proportion of pupils, around a fifth, is reaching above average standards.
106. Only one lesson was seen. From this, and from teachers' planning, pupils' recorded work and displays, the quality of teaching and learning overall is judged to be good. In

Years 5 and 6 it is very good. This very good teaching and learning is evident for example, in the constructive marking of work, which informs pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. The care taken by pupils to investigate products, and to design, make and evaluate their own, show that teachers set high standards and expect pupils to try hard and do their best. Pupils, for example, erected different tents and a gazebo before designing their own shelters in considerable detail.

107. Teachers' planning and pupils' folders show that all aspects of design and technology are well understood by teachers and this is reflected in pupils' work. Pupils are very enthusiastic and co-operate well in groups, which has a strong impact on their learning.
108. Satisfactory use is made of literacy skills in pupils' work, for example when labelling diagrams and writing up evaluations. Older pupils, especially, make good use of numeracy skills, for example when using weights to test the strength of fabrics, when comparing the price of different products and when measuring materials in construction. Some appropriate use is made of ICT, for example when displaying and comparing information from a class survey on biscuits, and when creating designs for Joseph's coat.
109. The subject is well led and managed. Planning is based on national guidelines that are helping to ensure the ongoing development of skills. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning with a view to improving their quality and raising standards. Resources have been audited, and the co-ordinator has recognised the need to have these more readily stored and available for the units being studied. The need to review both the allocation of time to the subject, and how this is timetabled, so that teaching and learning can be more effective, has also been recognised. Assessment procedures are good and teachers are starting to use the information which they gather about standards and pupils' progress to help them to plan the next steps in teaching and learning.
110. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator's role has been developed and a scheme of work is now in place.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Progress for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, is good in Years 1 and 2 and all pupils achieve well. In Years 3 to 6, progress for all pupils is very good and all pupils achieve very well.
112. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on fieldwork and the development of geographical enquiry skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of the local area as they explore the school grounds and the local environment. They study photographs and maps and produce plans and maps of the local area. Their awareness of places beyond their own locality and their knowledge of other cultures develops as they follow the travels of a bear around the world, tracing his route on maps and globes, discussing his method of travel and finding out about the physical features, climate and way of life of the places that he visits. During the inspection, they continued with their study of the imaginary Isle of Struay in Scotland, comparing and contrasting life on Struay with life in Suffolk. Teaching built on pupils' prior knowledge and very good displays produced by pupils. These include a collage of the Isle of Struay, showing physical features and buildings, paintings of the people who

live on the island and letters 'from' Katie Morag, a fictitious character in the story about Struay.

113. Pupils in Year 4 made links with mathematics as they developed their skills in carrying out a local survey of how pupils in the class spend their time. They had already decided what evidence to collect and had devised a questionnaire to identify the time spent on 18 activities, such as eating and attending school. During the lesson, each pupil collated the whole-class data and calculated the time spent on each category. Their next task will be to work out average times and convert them to decimals and fractions, with support where needed. They have to decide on the most suitable method of tabulating results and then draw summary tables of the data, thus developing their ability to quantify, sort, order and present number data and to use number and number systems. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 drew on their prior learning about rivers to gain an understanding of how they erode and how landscape features such as meanders, ox-bow lakes and waterfalls develop. Their learning was enhanced through the use of a video of the River Severn, showing underwater shots of erosion, undercutting and waterfall formation. Some pupils used the computer program, *Riverside Explorer* to further develop their knowledge of how rivers shape the land.
114. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and place strong emphasis on geographical enquiry skills and first-hand observation where possible. Mapping skills are well taught. Teachers set high standards and expect pupils to do their best. They plan effectively to match work to the learning needs of pupils of all abilities. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 set challenging open-ended tasks that meet the needs of all pupils and expect very high standards of effort and presentation. Pupils throughout the school are interested, enthusiastic and motivated as a result. The learning intentions for lessons are made clear to pupils and opportunities are provided for them to assess what they have learned. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a very good knowledge of their own learning. The management of pupils is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6, thus promoting good and very good learning, respectively. Time and resources are used very well and teaching assistants give very valuable support to pupils with special educational needs. As pupils mature, they show a developing sense of responsibility for their own learning and respect for the contribution of others in discussion. Opportunities are provided for them to discuss moral issues in relation to environmental factors, such as pollution. Their social development is enhanced as they work together in groups and explore the local area. They develop their literacy skills through discussion and writing.
115. The curriculum is enriched through local studies in Felixstowe (Years 1 and 2) and Bury St Edmunds (Year 6). Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good. The monitoring of teaching and learning, teachers' plans and pupils' work by the subject leader is very good. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress at the end of each unit of work are very good and the information obtained is used well to inform future planning.
116. The subject is very well managed by an experienced subject leader. He has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to bring about further development and improvement. Standards are improving, through the emphasis on geographical enquiry skills and fieldwork and the ability of staff to meet the needs of pupils of varying abilities. Resources are good and are used well to promote learning. The school's priorities for development, with the emphasis on independent learning, are appropriate and reflect the school's aims and values.

HISTORY

117. Standards in history are above average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection in Year 2 and maintains the position in Year 6. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, in Year 3 and the Years 5 and 6 class. However, teachers' planning and the work in pupils' notebooks in all classes show that standards are above those expected nationally. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well.
118. History is planned on a two-year cycle, in mixed-age classes, so that pupils cover the full programme of work. Pupils are encouraged to pose historical questions and research the answers, thus developing their historical enquiry skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 study famous people and events, and toys, homes and schools in their grandparents' and great grandparents' time. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 took on the role of historical detectives, as they carried out research on the Ancient Egyptians and recorded their findings on gods and goddesses, farming, people, and mummies. They asked and answered questions about what has survived and were able to make inferences and deductions about life in the past from artefacts and pictures. They used more than one source of information and were particularly mature in going over to the computers for short periods to research specific information. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were challenged to be archaeologists and to bring evidence of their findings on Aztec society to the museum archivist, i.e. the class teacher. They used a range of appropriate sources, including the Internet, to describe features of Aztec society, giving reasons for events and changes and selecting and organising their findings to produce a structured piece of work. Links were made with music and dance as the school prepared for a public performance of dance. The theme, *Farewell The King* was taken from the title of a book, published in 2000, about the Sutton Hoo burial ground, which was illustrated by pupils at the school.
119. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2, although the available evidence suggests that teaching and learning are good. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good. Teachers demonstrate very good historical knowledge and they teach historical enquiry skills very well, thereby making knowledge relevant and interesting for pupils. Pupils show a thorough knowledge of the events and people that they have studied, particularly when they have participated in linked visits, for example, to Ipswich Museum and Foxburrow Farm (in connection with their study of the Ancient Britons). Lessons are well planned and pupils develop their literacy skills through report writing and imaginative writing. Teachers' very high expectations, very effective teaching methods and very good management inspire pupils to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. Time and resources are used very well to promote learning. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' social development is enhanced through group work, discussions and visits, and their very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships contribute to their learning.
120. An enriched curriculum is in place and equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information obtained at the end of each unit of work is well used to inform future planning. The monitoring of teaching and learning, teachers' plans and pupils' work by the subject leader is very good.
121. Leadership and management of history are very good and ensure a very clear focus on what needs to be done to bring about improvement. The school's aims and values are

reflected in the work of the subject. Standards are rising, through the encouragement of the use of historical enquiry skills, visits to places of historical interest and the success of staff in meeting the needs of pupils of varying abilities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122. Standards are average in Year 2, Year 6 and throughout the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress, building on what are often below average levels of skill on entry. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen and resources, with the recent addition of an ICT suite, are very much improved. There is a need to improve the provision of software to support pupils' learning in some subjects, notably mathematics and science.
123. In Year 2, most pupils use the mouse with reasonable confidence and control, although some of them are yet to develop keyboard skills fully. They enter text and edit their work, putting in spaces and correcting spelling and punctuation errors. They use paint programs, making choices from the toolbar to create different effects. They begin to understand how to control equipment, such as a floor robot, recognising the link between the instructions given and what happens. Information, for example on their favourite weather, is entered, displayed and compared.
124. Pupils in Year 6 use their word processing skills to match their work to their audience, for example by changing the style, size and colour of font, highlighting and underlining. These skills have contributed to their multi-media presentations, where slides and sound effects have also been added. They enter information to create a data bank; they realise the usefulness of spreadsheets, for example, when planning a party. Planning shows that pupils will be using sensors to sense and record changes, for example, in light. Pupils have used a computer microscope and have access to the internet for research.
125. From pupils' past work and the lessons seen, it is judged that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are generally well planned and organised so that good use is made of the time available. Very good use is made of teaching assistants, both when supervising and working alongside pupils in the computer suite and when supporting in classes. In one lesson, good ongoing assessment had identified pupils needing extra support, which was effectively provided by the teaching assistant. Pupils' work is generally well assessed and marked, showing comments that inform pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. Teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils should do and the standards they should reach, although the use of mixed ability pairing when using computers does not always give adequate support to the less able or provide enough challenge for the most able. Classes are managed well, resulting in good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Year 6 pupils take greater responsibility for their own learning, with opportunities to work independently and unsupervised in the computer suite.
126. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning in the other subjects is developing, and the school recognises the need for teachers and teaching assistants to have further training in this area. It was not strongly evident during the inspection. In discussion pupils recall little use of ICT, particularly in mathematics and science lessons. Some use is made in literacy, for example when the reports by pupils in Years 5 and 6 concerning a visit to the local newspaper offices were carefully presented using a word processing program.

127. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. A scheme of work based on national guidelines is helping to ensure that appropriate skills are being developed throughout the school and is building up teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. Pupils usefully keep a folder with samples of their work and assessment sheets. These sheets record individual achievements and are starting to be used by teachers to help them plan the next steps in teaching and learning. A very well trained teaching assistant works in the suite in the mornings, and provides very good support to groups of pupils. This also helps to ensure that this facility is efficiently and effectively used. For example, she worked with a group of Year 2 pupils during literacy, showing them how to drag text to sequence a series of instructions, enabling them to make good progress in their learning. This teaching assistant also runs a computer club at lunchtimes, which pupils are keen to attend and provides further learning opportunities. She also provides some support to teachers by familiarising them with programs and helping them to develop their skills further.

MUSIC

128. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. From this, some recorded work and the rehearsal of the musical performance *Farewell The King*, standards in both Years 2 and 6 are judged to be average. Satisfactory progress is made throughout the school. In Years 5 and 6, where music is taken by a specialist teacher, progress is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, when standards by Year 6 were below average and resources were limited.

129. Pupils in Year 2 know the term *pitch* and recognise whether notes are of higher or lower pitch. They have an awareness of pulse and rhythm. In the rehearsal seen, pupils in Years 5 and 6 sang clearly and tunefully, and made very good use of tuned and untuned percussion, composing and performing well for different effects, for example the burial of a king. They maintained their own parts well whilst performing by ear. They evaluated their performance well, mentioning important points such as concentration, co-operation and keeping together. Their music folders show a good knowledge of the Indonesian Gamelan instruments, currently on loan to the school. Pupils work well in small groups, composing, performing and evaluating, for example, a piece called *Walking On Water*, based on an appraisal of *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

130. Teaching and learning are good. It is clear from the quality of the musical performance produced that teachers expect a lot of pupils and encourage them to try hard and do their best. In a lesson in Years 1 and 2 the good use of instruments enabled pairs of pupils to identify and play the notes to lines of nursery rhyme tunes, and to see whether they went up or down in pitch. Pupils are well managed, and as a result behave well and have positive attitudes to the subject. Access to the Gamelan instruments has demonstrated to them the deep respect shown to this style of music. Pupils took their shoes off and knelt quietly by the instruments before playing them. Some use is just starting to be made of ICT with, for example, programs for composing.

131. The management of the subject is sound. There are appropriate plans for monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching. Choirs are formed for special performances, but there are currently no extra curricular musical activities. Some pupils have the opportunity to learn instruments such as the flute, guitar and violin. Visiting workshops on drumming and rhythm have enriched the provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. A limited number of lessons was observed. These included swimming in Year 6, gymnastics in Years 1 and 2 and games in Years 3 and 4. In each of the years seen standards in the aspect of physical education being taught were average, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. The full curriculum is planned for and taught, including outdoor and adventurous activities. Competitive team sport, including football, netball, rounders, cricket and cross country running, enriches the curriculum well. Pupils also take part in a swimming gala which is organised by the school for other schools in the local area. An annual sports day involves all pupils in a mixture of competitive and non-competitive activities.
133. Most pupils are able to swim at least the expected length of 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Pupils have regular swimming lessons throughout the year in Years 5 and 6, which is a good level of provision, better than that found in many other primary schools. This contributes to most pupils reaching or surpassing expectations by the time they leave the school. The swimming lesson observed during the inspection was very well taught. Pupils were very well managed and controlled, so that they behaved very sensibly and safely, displaying good, positive attitudes and working hard. This enabled them to make very good progress in developing their swimming skills. Care was taken to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils were identified and met, through teaching in three different groups according to swimming ability. In response to the very good teaching and because they had such a positive attitude, pupils achieved very well.
134. In the Years 1 and 2 gymnastics lesson, good teaching led to good progress as pupils developed their movement skills, changing direction and working at different levels. They were given some good opportunities to observe one another's work, which encouraged them to try harder to polish and improve their own performance.
135. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator with an appropriate specialist background and expertise. She has effectively supported her colleagues, keeping them up to date and passing on advice from the many courses that she has attended.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. Standards are average and meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a similar position to that at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make very good progress and achieve well. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, that is, in Years 5 and 6. However, additional evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning and through discussion with teachers and pupils.
137. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a developing understanding of the life and work of Jesus and of special times in the Christian calendar. They have a basic knowledge of Judaism and compare related elements in their own experience with related elements in the experience of others. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the teachings of Jesus and about Christian belief. They consider the importance of family and friends. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their understanding of the Christian community and demonstrate a basic understanding of the central features of Christianity and, to a lesser extent, Judaism and Islam. They describe and explain related elements of experience. During the inspection, they developed their understanding of a faith community and the obligations of commitment to a faith. They were introduced to the concept of the Holy Trinity, which they found difficult to understand but were reassured by the fact that many Christian believers struggle to fully understand it.

138. During the year, pupils celebrate Christmas and Easter and learn about Diwali and the Chinese New Year. They have a developing knowledge of the importance of light in different religions and how it makes people feel, for example, calm, peaceful and happy. They reflect on the beauty and pattern created in the world by God and develop their awareness that, for many faiths, belief in God as a creator is grounded in experiences of beauty and pattern in the natural world. They begin to understand that faith can change the way that people lead their lives. They make links with the charitable work of individuals and organisations today.
139. There are good links between religious education lessons and acts of collective worship. During the inspection, assemblies focused on Comic Relief, which the school supports, and pupils learned that it helps people in need in a variety of ways, both in this country and overseas. Very good displays and video evidence made it possible for them to relate to specific people who are helped, for example, a Welsh boy who cares for his sick father and a refugee from Nigeria. Assemblies are spiritual occasions, which provide opportunities for everyone present to reflect, to sing hymns and to pray. Quiet taped music on entry, *Fields of Gold* by Sting, established an ethos of calm reflection, which pupils responded to well.
140. It is not possible to make a firm judgement concerning the quality of teaching and learning other than in Years 5 and 6, where it is very good, but the available evidence suggests that teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers' good subject knowledge is instrumental in helping pupils to understand that there are faiths other than their own, and to gain an insight into the beliefs and values of others. Good planning leads to the progressive development of pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills. Teachers' high expectations inspire pupils to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. The teaching methods used engage pupils' interest, attention and concentration. This was seen in a lesson in Years 5 and 6, where the teacher challenged and inspired pupils to grapple with the difficult but stimulating Christian concept of the Holy Trinity. Pupils were encouraged to express their own thoughts and reactions and to respond to the idea in their own way, describing it, for example, as 'awesome' and wonderful'. They show genuine respect for the beliefs and practices of others. Very good class management enables constructive use to be made of time and resources. Valuable support is given by teaching assistants. The quality and use of ongoing assessment in the lesson in Years 5 and 6 was instrumental in the very good learning that ensued.
141. The curriculum builds upon and affirms pupils' own experiences of special occasions, festivals and their cultural identity. Foundations are laid for their understanding of the concepts specific to a faith tradition through the exploration of religious ideas and meanings. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect, for example, on rules and choices. Stories from different religions and cultures are read and discussed in literacy. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced as they respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. They begin to develop their own value systems and make responsible decisions on moral issues.
142. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring the subject's performance. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment is used well to guide future planning. The subject leader is developing a useful portfolio of pupils' assessed work.
143. The subject is managed well. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has a clear sense of what needs to be done to bring about continuing development and improvement. Her personal interest in and understanding of the subject ensure that she is a confident and effective subject co-ordinator. This has been recognised

outside the school and she is currently involve in writing a scheme of work for the Foundation Stage. She promotes high standards and regularly updates her own expertise, using the knowledge gained for the benefit of others. The scheme of work, based on the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus provides very good guidance to teachers and is supported by the provision of adequate resources for Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They are of good quality and are used very well.