

INSPECTION REPORT

FRETtenham FIRST SCHOOL

Frettenham, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120809

Headteacher: Mrs J K Elliott-Hunter

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven
3861

Dates of inspection: 9 – 10 December 2002

Inspection number: 252406

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 8 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Road Frettenham Norwich Norfolk
Postcode:	NR12 7LL
Telephone number:	01603 737405
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss C Peek
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3961	Michael Raven	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Physical education Foundation Stage of Learning	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
9756	Kenneth Parsons	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	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? How well is the school led and managed?
23818	Alison Pangbourne	Team inspector	Art and design Religious education	
20951	Philip Littlejohn	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Frettenham First School is a very small village school situated in rural Norfolk. For the past two years it has worked in partnership with Hainford First School, which is situated in another small village nearby. This initiative, which was the first in the county, means that the headteacher leads both schools, spending some time in each, although both retain their own governing body and staff. Because the schools work in partnership, both were inspected in the same week by the same inspection team. The school caters for 28 boys and girls aged from four to eight years. Pupils are taught in two classes, one consisting of the youngest children and those in Year 1 and the other made up of pupils in Years 2 and 3. There are only two pupils in Year 2 this year. Six of the youngest children attend school part-time in their first term. All the pupils come from White United Kingdom backgrounds. None is learning English as an additional language and there is little representation of cultural and ethnic diversity in the area. About one fifth of the pupils has special educational needs, which is similar to the proportion found nationally. Their special needs cover a range of learning and behavioural difficulties. Children's skills on starting school vary greatly from year to year because of the very small numbers involved. The school's assessments of attainment on entry made over a number of years show that it receives a group of children whose personal and social skills, communication and language skills and mathematical development are broadly average when they start school at the age of four.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are above average at the end of Year 3. The quality of teaching is good and it promotes good learning. The school is well led and managed, with particular strengths resulting from the partnership with Hainford First School. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher. The role of subject co-ordinators is very well developed. The good quality leadership and management has a positive effect on the quality of education provided and the standards achieved.
- Pupils' basic skills, especially in reading, are above average because the teaching of basic skills is very good.
- The pupils are very well managed and this promotes very good behaviour, relationships and attitudes to learning.
- Parents and carers think highly of the school, which has established a strong partnership with them.
- There are very good links with other organisations; not only the partnership school, but also the pre-school and other schools in the local area.
- Teachers keep a very close check on how pupils are getting on and they make good use of this information to plan work that meets pupils' needs.

What could be improved

- The opportunities provided for the youngest children in Reception to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. It has made good progress since then. Although standards vary greatly from year to year with such small numbers of pupils, the trend in Year 2 national test results in reading, writing and mathematics has been broadly in line with the nationally improving

trend since 1998. The above average standards in reading in Year 3 reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Standards in writing and mathematics have improved since then. All the key issues for improvement identified by the last inspection have been successfully addressed.

STANDARDS

The children in the Reception year achieve well. They are likely to exceed expectations in their personal, social and emotional development by the time they move on to Year 1. The same is true of their skills in communication, language and literacy and their mathematical development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative skills are likely to meet expectations.

There are only two pupils in Year 2 this year. Therefore, it is not appropriate to make overall judgements about standards in that year group. Inspection judgements relate to standards in Year 3. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average in the most recent national tests and assessments taken by pupils in Year 2 (who are now in Year 3). They were also above average compared with those achieved in similar schools. Only eight pupils took those tests and great caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions based on such small numbers. Inevitably, standards will fluctuate from year to year with the varying characteristics of the individuals involved.

The inspection team finds that standards are indeed above average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 3. There are particular strengths in reading throughout the school. Standards are also above average in speaking and listening. Standards in the other subjects, including science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education, are average. No judgement can be made about standards in music or physical education. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for pupils to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics. In response to the good teaching that they receive pupils work very hard, with great enthusiasm, and this enables them to achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic, try hard and enjoy lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play very harmoniously together, showing respect for one another's feelings.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average, with no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception and Year 1	Years 2 and 3
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers are taught very well. The teaching of reading is a particular strength, so that pupils learn very helpful ways of tackling unfamiliar words that they meet in their reading. Teachers are very good at promoting very good behaviour and attitudes to learning. They do this through the positive relationships which they establish with their pupils and their very good class management. It means that pupils learn and achieve well, because they concentrate well and try hard to do their best. Teachers make very

Careful and accurate assessments of how pupils are getting on and use this information very well in planning their teaching. This promotes good learning because work is carefully matched to pupils' needs and capabilities. The teaching of the youngest children in their Reception year promotes their personal, social and emotional development well and successfully encourages very positive attitudes to learning. It gives due emphasis to developing their language, literacy and mathematical skills. However, it offers too few opportunities for development of their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their physical and creative development through talk, enquiry and play.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is enriched by links with the community, including the church, the pre-school and other schools in the local area, particularly the other school in the partnership. The curriculum for the children in Reception is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are supported well and helped to play a full part in all that the school has to offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Opportunities for pupils to learn to appreciate their own culture and the diversity of cultures within British society, whilst satisfactory, could be improved.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Very close checks are made on pupils' academic performance and personal development.

The school has established a very effective partnership with parents and carers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The partnership with Hainford First School brings considerable advantages to leadership and management. It enables both the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to play their roles effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are committed and hardworking. They keep themselves well informed about the strengths of the school and what could be improved. Their commitment to the partnership is proving to be of considerable benefit to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators have established a healthy culture of regular checking on the quality of teaching and on standards and progress. This process now needs to be improved, so that it focuses more closely on developing teaching. Appropriate comparisons are made with the performance of pupils in other schools both within the county and nationally. The information gained is used to help in the setting of new targets for pupils' performance in national tests.

The strategic use of resources	Good. The deployment of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to work across both sites is a particularly effective use of human resources. Care is taken to see that the school secures economic, efficient and effective services.
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Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall, but the lack of a hall and a dedicated outdoor activity area for the children in Reception restricts work on physical development.

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 teaching is good. • They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. • Their children are making good progress. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities offered outside lessons.

The inspection supports fully all the parents' positive comments about the school. The range of activities outside lessons is small, but it is not unreasonable in such a small school, with so few staff and pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There are three main reasons why standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are above average in Year 3. Since the children start school at the age of four with levels of language and mathematical development which are broadly average, the school does well to achieve above average standards by the time pupils are eight. The very good teaching of the basic skills of reading and writing and the use of numbers is a major factor in this achievement. Teachers make good use of national guidance on teaching the basic skills. The teaching of reading is a particular strength. The children in Reception get off to a very good start in this respect. Very skilled teaching of the sounds that letters make and how they combine to make words equips the children from the start with some important skills. By the end of just one term in Reception nearly all of the children can read at least one set of common words, which occur frequently in early reading books. They can read such words as, *it, cat, dog, no, at, get, am* and *yes* confidently. Most of the children can read at least two sets of such common words, and half of them read more. Their reading skills are considerably better than those of most children of this age. They make very good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to help them to tackle unfamiliar words. The combination of good 'word attack' or phonic skills with a wide vocabulary of words recognised by sight, stands the children in good stead to meet the increasing demands on their reading skills as they move up through Reception to Years 1, 2 and 3. By the time they are in Year 3 pupils make good use of a range of different skills to help them to read increasingly challenging and stimulating books, both for pleasure and to find information. They use not only their very good phonic skills, but also draw on the meaning and context to work out unfamiliar words. Nearly all pupils have skills which are better than those usually found in Year 3 and which in fact meet expectations for the end of Year 4 and beyond.
2. Just as they get off to a very good start learning to read, the children in Reception also make a good start on writing. The teaching is based on a very good understanding of how to promote this basic skill, linked closely with the development of reading. It is carefully pitched, so that pupils are encouraged to try harder by experiencing plenty of success. The result is that the children have better writing skills than most children of this age. They nearly all form their letters well and are quick to point out the teacher's 'mistake' when he writes the letter 'S' the wrong way round! Most can write simple words such as *bed*, showing good regular letter formation and size. This firm foundation, which is laid down in Reception and Year 1, is built on well in Years 2 and 3. By the time they are in Year 3 pupils write using a neat joined-up script. They make good use of punctuation, such as speech marks and commas, to enliven their writing and write for a variety of purposes, including factual accounts and describing characters' feelings in a story they have read. The standards reached by most pupils are similar to those expected by the end of Year 4, and so are above average.
3. The good quality teaching of mathematics makes a major contribution to the achievement of standards that are also above average by Year 3. The very strong start made in Reception is built on well in Years 2 and 3. It means that the children in Reception can work out the difference between a given number and five and understand, for example, the idea of *longer* and *shorter* and can classify a set of objects according to length. Such skills meet expectations for pupils in Year 1. By Year 3 pupils recall some of the multiplication tables, such as the five-times table, and use these in mental calculation. They use simple fractions such as $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$. This level of attainment is expected of pupils a year or more older.
4. Another factor in the achievement of above average standards in the basic subjects is pupils' enthusiasm and positive attitudes to learning. As soon as the children start school in Reception teachers work hard and successfully to make learning enjoyable and satisfying. This positive, encouraging approach is built on well in Years 2 and 3. Teachers and all the other adults who work with pupils set a very good tone. Work is carefully planned so that it is stimulating and pupils experience appropriate levels of both challenge and success, whatever their capabilities. Those

who find learning more difficult, including those with behavioural difficulties, are given good quality support and guidance. They are encouraged to try hard and do their best and care is taken to see that they make good progress, regardless of their starting point.

5. The allocation of over half of all the teaching time to English and mathematics, which is common in first schools, means that relatively little time is left for all the eight other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. This is the main reason why standards are average in these subjects, and not above average. It is a common finding. Another factor in this lies in weaknesses in the curriculum for the children in Reception. Their personal, social and emotional development is fostered very well, and they develop very positive attitudes to learning. Similarly, there is good attention to the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and their mathematical development. However, work on knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development is inappropriate because it offers too few opportunities for talk, enquiry and play. This means that the children do not make as good a start on learning about science, history, geography and technology and developing their artistic and physical skills as they do in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. All parents expressed the view that their children like coming to school; certainly this is borne out by the smiling faces in the school – the pupils are happy here. They arrive in the morning prepared and ready to participate in what the school offers and this makes a positive contribution to their learning. They enjoy their lessons and they usually participate well in them. Most lessons provide a stimulating experience and the pupils contribute to their success. For example, in a Years 2 and 3 mathematics lesson, pupils were so keen to answer the teacher's questions that the only problem was their tendency to call out the answers rather than put their hands up. In another class, a science lesson enabled the children to enjoy a practical activity by investigating their sense of touch.
7. Parents unanimously hold positive views about behaviour in the school. Again, inspection findings support this view. Pupils' behaviour is very good and this means that teachers do not have to spend too much time maintaining order. There are clear expectations of behaviour in both classes and pupils accept them. For example, in a Years 2 and 3 'circle time', the teacher was able to participate with the pupils in an activity, but then immediately to re-assert her position when appropriate. The very small class sizes mean that any misbehaviour is hard to hide and can be dealt with immediately. Pupils are motivated to produce good work and behave very well. They play well together at break times. No bullying or harassment was seen during the inspection and such incidents are very rare. There have been no exclusions from the school.
8. Pupils' personal development is very good. The attention each individual receives in the small classes fosters self-confidence and enables them to relate well to each other and to adults. This applies to pupils of all levels of attainment. They share resources well and help each other. For example, one pupil took a girl who fell over in the playground to seek help. There is a range of opportunities for those capable of taking initiative and showing personal responsibility in their work and around the school. They know that they themselves can organise things, rather than wait for teachers to do so. For example, in Class 2, a group of girls re-arranged and tidied the classroom ready for the next lesson with minimal teacher supervision. Pupils' comments on their own targets in their annual reports show very good self-awareness for their age.
9. Relationships in the school are very good. In a small school such as this, all staff know their pupils very well and build close relationships with them, contributing to mutual respect and partnership in learning. Pupils respect each other as individuals and they understand the impact of their actions on others, with little friction evident. They share resources and co-operate with each other, respecting each other's beliefs. In a Reception and Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, pupils settled to their group tasks very well and co-operated well together. Pupils work constructively together and no pupil is excluded from the groups. Boys and girls work together unselfconsciously. In the playground, pupils from all year groups play together well. They listen to

what others have to say and are usually polite. Just occasionally, the informal relationship with adults, for example, calling teachers by their first names, can spill over into silliness.

10. Attendance is above the national average for a school of this type, with minimal unauthorised absences. Pupils clearly want to come to school and absence due to illness is at a very low level, with holidays taken in term time making up a significant proportion of the absence figures. Pupils arrive on time in the morning and there is an efficient start to the school day.
11. The general standards of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance have improved since the last inspection of the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The good quality teaching in both classes meets well the needs of all pupils and promotes good learning, so that pupils achieve well and attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a particular challenge in this very small school in that each class contains pupils from two different year groups, although this is offset to some extent by small class sizes, particularly in Years 2 and 3. The teachers are well aware of their responsibility for meeting the needs of all pupils, whatever their age or starting point, and they carefully plan their teaching and the pupils' work with this in mind. They are helped in this by the availability of plenty of good quality information on what pupils know, understand and can do and how they are getting on. This results from the close and accurate checks they regularly make on pupils' attainment and progress, which are carefully recorded. It enables them to group pupils appropriately for work, often according to ability and regardless of age. It also allows them to match work closely to pupils' needs, ensuring appropriate success and challenge, and providing individual learning support as necessary, for example for those pupils who have special learning or behavioural needs.
13. There are a number of other important strengths in teaching. The very good teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers gets the children off to a flying start in Reception and is built on well in Years 2 and 3. This is based on very good understanding of the skills pupils need, particularly reading skills, and how these are best taught and learned. For example, the children in Reception are taught to use a very helpful approach to learning to read and write new words, tracing the letters of the word with their finger on a rough surface whilst saying the word out loud. This is a very effective way of using the sense of touch together with sight and hearing to learn to read and write and it is very successful with young children and those who find learning more difficult. The success of this very good teaching is evident as pupils in Years 2 and 3 read and spell, particularly in their approach to unfamiliar words. Because they have confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the sounds that letters make and how they combine to make words, most pupils tackle words they do not recognise without hesitation, successfully applying their phonic skills. This good teaching not only promotes high standards in reading, but also gives pupils confidence in their own abilities and encourages independent learning, as they know there is something they can do for themselves to help them to read and spell unfamiliar words.
14. There are, however, weaknesses in the teaching of the Reception children. Although the teaching promotes very successfully their personal, social and emotional development and their literacy and numeracy skills, it does not work so well in the other areas of learning which make up the National Curriculum for children of this age. The children work on science, for example, together with those in Year 1 and the approach is too formal. They are not given enough opportunities for less structured, more exploratory and play-based activities, with the emphasis on talking and doing. The work which is planned to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, their physical development and their creative development is not consistent with the latest national guidance on the promotion of these areas of learning at the Foundation Stage of Learning.
15. Teachers manage their pupils very successfully, establishing very good working relationships and maintaining good discipline. This means that pupils behave very well and try their best. Because they are able to get on and learn in a positive, orderly, purposeful atmosphere, pupils soon develop an enthusiastic attitude to learning and enjoy what they do. This is established early on, as the children start school in Reception, where the teacher's quiet, calm manner establishes a positive

classroom tone. It is built on very successfully in Years 2 and 3, where pupils are managed gently but firmly, with great good humour when appropriate. Support staff make a positive contribution to the management of pupils, particularly through their skill in supporting those who have special behavioural or learning needs. They encourage these pupils to play a full part in lessons, concentrate and try hard, even though they may find learning more difficult.

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

16. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good for all pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 and all statutory requirements are met, including the requirement to teach religious education. The curriculum is appropriately planned and adapted to meet the needs of those who have special educational needs and the most able. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils are able to play a full part in all that the school has to offer. However, the curriculum for the children at the Foundation Stage (in their Reception year) is unsatisfactory. It gives due emphasis to the children's personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. However, it does not provide well enough for them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world or their physical and creative skills.
17. National guidance on teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers is used to good effect. This has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and the standards achieved.
18. The provision of activities outside lessons and outside the formal curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school is limited in what it can offer by the small number of adults available, the small number and young age of the pupils and the isolated rural setting. The school organises a wide range of visits and invites visitors into school, thus enriching pupils' experience. For example, the vicar is a regular and valued contributor to school assemblies. There are performances and social events for parents, friends and the community. Occasional after-school clubs include football and cricket, depending on parent availability. There are also lunchtime recorder lessons and swimming teaching, which extends beyond the statutory requirements.
19. The school makes very good provision for personal, social and health education for all age groups. This aspect of the school's work makes a strong contribution to the development of very good attitudes, values and behaviour. It also contributes appropriately to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Governors have approved a suitable programme for sex and relationships education, which is appropriate to the needs of pupils of this age. Awareness of the use and misuse of drugs is appropriately included as part of the health education programme.
20. The local community is central to the life of the school. The school is seen as the centre of the community and is involved fully in village life. The school has very good relationships with partner institutions and especially Hainford First School, sharing, as it does, its headteacher, subject coordinators and curriculum.
21. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to have some weaknesses. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to explore a range of beliefs. During 'circle times', pupils are encouraged to consider values and beliefs and to reflect on their own experiences. The school rules encourage respect for others, and this aim is met. The school's ethos provides a climate in which differences are respected and the contributions of all are valued. Opportunities to support and develop pupils' spiritual awareness in subjects are identified in planning with the result that the opportunities for spiritual development are good. The school provides a daily act of worship. During assemblies, use is made of a range of opportunities to support spiritual development. These include time for reflection in which pupils have the opportunity to quietly consider matters of a spiritual nature.
22. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Positive moral attitudes are promoted throughout the school. Discussion is used effectively to enable pupils to develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Circle times are used effectively to help pupils to understand some of the needs, attitudes and feelings of others. Adults provide very good role models and are

consistent in implementing the school's behaviour management policy. Throughout the school, the system of rewards and positive encouragement has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour by one pupil to another is effectively dealt with through discussion or other effective behaviour management. All pupils are aware of the school rules.

23. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their social skills. They work well in a variety of situations. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, take responsibility and help others. The school council has representatives from pupils of all ages, elected by their fellow pupils. The relationships between pupils and with staff are very good. The programme of visits and visitors has a very positive impact on developing pupils' social development and they relate well to other people and have very good attitudes to their learning.
24. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and there have been improvements since the last inspection. The school has an ethos of encouraging respect for the beliefs, values and customs of others. Local culture is celebrated and pupils learn, for instance, about events of cultural significance, such as Remembrance Sunday and the tradition of wearing poppies. In this small rural community there is little first-hand evidence of the multi-cultural nature of British society as a whole. In an imaginative response to this, all pupils and staff have attended a day of activities aimed at raising multicultural awareness organised by the local education authority at a nearby school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. All parents who expressed a view, think that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can feel safe and valued, allowing them to concentrate on their learning. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. All adults in the school are made aware of their child protection responsibilities. There are appropriate safeguards to ensure that pupils do not gain access to unsuitable sites or material whilst using the Internet. The school provides a safe environment and routine health and safety procedures and testing are in place. Governors have been actively involved in monitoring and ensuring that the necessary health and safety risk assessments are carried out. No unsafe practice was seen during the inspection. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure the safety on school trips, but these need to be formalised in a written risk assessment.
26. All teachers are active in the pastoral care of their pupils. In one sense this starts even before they are on roll, with the links with the adjacent pre-school group helping to provide a stress-free start to formal education. The adults in the school make considerable efforts to address the welfare of individual pupils. The staff are approachable, are genuinely concerned to help pupils when they need it and they do their best to resolve any problems they have. The school is effective in helping pupils become mature and responsible individuals. In a small school such as this, teachers inevitably know their pupils very well on a day-to-day basis. However, in addition, the school has very good formal monitoring sheets to track individual pupils' personal development and which highlight any areas of difficulty an individual may be having.
27. The school has good procedures to monitor attendance and encourage pupils to attend regularly. The headteacher regularly reviews attendance data and parents know and follow the procedures if their child is absent from school.
28. There are good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. The school has a clear set of expectations backed up by a system of rewards and sanctions, which are well known to pupils. However, the small classes and the strength of the relationships between teachers and pupils really make the formal systems less important than they would be in a larger school – in a class of ten pupils the dynamics of managing behaviour are rightly far less formal than they would be in a class of thirty pupils. There are good procedures in place for dealing with any incidents of oppressive behaviour.

29. The school has improved its provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils since the previous inspection.
30. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, especially in English, mathematics and science, are very good and a strength of the school. Procedures are consistent between classes and with the partner school at Hainford. Very good examples were seen of assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage and Years 1, 2 and 3. Teachers make very good use of the information which they gather to enable them to group pupils according to ability and plan work which meets their particular needs. The very good use of assessment information means that work is carefully planned to meet the needs of those who have special educational needs and the most able.
31. Pupils' understanding at the end of a topic or unit of work, especially in English, mathematics and science, is consistently assessed and the information gathered is used well to check on pupils' progress as they move through the school. Data from annual tests and assessments are analysed in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance, so that any shortcomings can be addressed. There is some helpful analysis of pupils' performance to assess whether there are any differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Data are used well to predict pupils' future performance and set targets. Teachers helpfully moderate their assessments with each other in order to ensure consistency and accuracy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. A very high proportion of parents took the opportunity to express their views about the school and they were strongly supportive of virtually all aspects of it. These very positive views highlight how well the school has taken parents' opinions and needs into account when forming the partnership with Hainford First School. A few parents indicated that there is a limited range of extra-curricular activities, an almost inevitable disadvantage of being such a small first school. Other than this, parents appreciate all aspects of the school's provision and believe that their children are benefiting from what the school offers.
33. Parents agree that they are kept well informed about their child's progress and inspection findings echo this view. An important part of this is the informality aspect – in such a small school, relationships between staff and parents can develop in a way impossible in a larger one. The headteacher is very aware that her responsibility for two schools inevitably reduces her availability to Frettenham parents. She has put in place effective measures to minimise this and she ensures that she is usually readily available, if needed, to see parents. Parents emphasised to the inspection team how much they appreciated this. The formal procedures for parent-teacher consultation are good, with a parents' evening each term to enable them to meet their child's teacher. The written reports provide sufficient detail on curriculum coverage and are personal to the individual. There are good targets, although more information on actual attainment against National Curriculum levels would help parents know how their child is progressing against a clear benchmark. The information the school provides for parents through the prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents is satisfactory.
34. Parents contribute well to their children's learning. Most help with homework, especially hearing their child read at home. A number of parents help in school, for example in design and technology lessons. The school has an active Friends' Association that organises social and fund-raising events. There is a home-school agreement in place, which most parents have signed, but it is hard to identify any practical effect. Very few parents attend the governors' annual meeting with parents.
35. The quality of the partnership with parents is a strength of the school, which has been maintained since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36. Two years ago, there was a significant change in the way that Frettenham First School is led and managed. As part of a pilot scheme for small schools in Norfolk, the school formed a partnership

with another small first school in the adjacent village of Hainford. The two schools retain their separate identity, but the following activities are conducted jointly:

- The headteacher fulfils this role in both schools, splitting her time between the two sites.
- There are separate governing bodies, but they operate a joint review committee.
- Headteacher performance monitoring is conducted jointly by the two governing bodies.
- There is one school secretary who serves both schools.
- Subject leaders manage their subjects in both schools.
- There are some joint activities for children.
- There is increasing development of policies and procedures common to both schools.

37. Against this context, it is clear that the headteacher's role is different in some respects from the norm, particularly during the past couple of years when the partnership has been established in practice. Parents think that the partnership is working well in practice and that the children are benefiting from it. They all agree that the school is well led and managed.
38. The leadership and management of Frettenham School by the headteacher and governors are good. The school governing body deserves real credit for adopting the radical approach, after having carried out a well-conducted review of alternative options. They have also provided clear leadership to the way that this innovative solution has been successfully implemented. The headteacher has also made a major contribution to making the partnership between the two schools a success. She has a clear vision of how the concept can be made to work in practice and has displayed the management skills to implement it. In particular, she has ensured that the governors, staff and parents have been comfortable with the way the project has proceeded. The headteacher has a thoughtful approach, which has helped her to identify the key steps in this process of integration. Her enthusiasm and skills in managing people have been key in ensuring it has happened at the right speed and that the concerns of all stakeholders have been accommodated.
39. The headteacher nominally spends two-fifths of her time leading Frettenham School. She displays good leadership qualities. She ensures everyone in the school community feels part of the team and supports them in all aspects of their development. There is a commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils, and teachers demonstrate good role models in their positive attitudes to all pupils. The school's aims and values are reflected well in its work. The headteacher is ensuring a clear educational direction for the work and direction of the school, with a good commitment to achieving high standards. The management style of the headteacher is building well on the advantages of a very small school to foster the very good relationships and the sense of teamwork to be found here. This includes the subject leaders for Frettenham, many of whom actually work at Hainford but have responsibility for both schools. The headteacher makes good use of these staff with particular specialisms and they are encouraged to take responsibility and lead by example. This is particularly fostered by the non-teaching time that they receive to fulfil their roles, including monitoring of both the planning for and the teaching of lessons. This is good practice, although the evaluations of teaching which subject co-ordinators make tend not to highlight any difficult messages and shy away somewhat from what needs to be improved. The headteacher herself is the co-ordinator for special educational needs and she is very effective in this role. She has a very good overview of provision throughout the school. The requirements of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice are fully met, the appropriate paperwork is in place and targets on the individual education plans are monitored regularly. The partnership is working particularly well in this area. Compared with a conventional model for a school of this size, where all co-ordinator roles would have to be shared between only three teachers, the advantages of having a wider pool of individuals has led to very good work in this area. They are clear about their objectives and the co-ordinators based at Hainford First School are effective in supporting their colleagues at Frettenham. The two sets of staff are well on the way to becoming an effective joint team.
40. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil all their statutory requirements in a satisfactory manner. Many governors have a particular responsibility for a curricular area. They have a well-planned programme of visits, and through them are obtaining a first-hand understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They also receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher. The chair of

governors has regular meetings with the headteacher, at which discussions are wide-ranging. The governing body is well led and is effective in carrying out its responsibilities, with a suitable range of sub-committees that are fulfilling their responsibilities well. The governors are clear about the nature of their "critical friend" role, but there is room for this to be developed a stage further. Governors understand the long-term goals for the school. They ensure that resources and school improvement are targeted strategically to match the priorities set. The Joint Self Review Committee (half its members from Hainford, half from Frettenham) is working its way through the local education authority self-evaluation model, a process that is helping the two governing bodies to evaluate the strengths and areas for improvement in both schools through the common school development plan. It also helps the two governing bodies to be effective at holding the headteacher to account and setting her performance targets, a process they carry out well. The school development plan has understandably concentrated mainly on needs common to both schools. The two governing bodies need to ensure that specific areas to be developed in one school - for example, the differing emphasis needed to develop the early years provision in each school - are addressed, with the added bonus that a strength in one school may help to address a need in the other. Most members of both governing bodies are thinking ahead to prepare for the next strategic development in the partnership arrangements.

41. The school systematically tracks and analyses the progress made by its pupils very thoroughly and uses the information it gathers to help identify areas for development. The school development plan is used well to steer the development of the school and the priorities are monitored and evaluated routinely. All key issues in the previous inspection report have been resolved. The headteacher, governors, subject leaders and staff share a very good commitment to succeed, both as an individual school and also as part of the partnership.
42. The financial planning is well linked to educational priorities. All funds, including specific grants, are used well to meet the needs of the pupils. There are clearly identified routines to enable the headteacher and governors to monitor the deployment of resources. Value for money principles lay at the very heart of the setting up of the partnership arrangements. On a more day-to-day basis, the school does consider the most cost-effective way of addressing an identified need, such as the purchase of new safety equipment for doors. The school has maintained a reasonably-sized contingency fund, particularly important in such a small school where funding uncertainties can have a dramatic effect on provision – not the least being whether the local education authority will be able to continue to help fund the additional costs of the partnership arrangements.
43. Routine financial management and administration of the school are well conducted. The very capable school secretary operates efficiently and unobtrusively. She has provided thoughtful ideas on improving the administrative arrangements for the partnership, such as standardising the two separate filing systems. Major problems with the software used to provide financial control (not the fault of the school) in 2001/02 have held back progress. In general, the use of new technology, such as computers and electronic mail, is sound; the school has not really explored the exciting possibilities that this could bring to the partnership. This could include teaching pupils remotely – one example might be to enable the two Year 2 pupils at Frettenham to join in a lesson with their Year 2 peers at Hainford using web cams. Similarly, this sort of link between the two staff rooms would enable advice from subject co-ordinators to be sought via an Internet link in the same informal, but productive, way that occurs in a shared staff room, despite the miles between them.
44. The school is very well resourced in terms of teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The school has two full-time teachers, giving the exceptional ratio of 14 pupils per class teacher. The partnership arrangement has yielded the resources to provide 40 per cent of the time of a non-teaching headteacher and the support of curriculum co-ordinators from Hainford, making it altogether a very strong package. All staff are well deployed. The school has used the statutory strategies for performance management to good effect and this has enabled professional development to be carried out successfully. Last year, the school provided a very good induction experience for a newly qualified teacher, allowing him to feel very well supported. The school is an effective provider of training for new teachers, seeing this as an opportunity to bring a wider range of adults into the pupils' orbit.

45. Learning resources are sound. There is a good level of hardware, including portable computers to teach ICT, whilst history benefits from the availability of old local census returns.

46. The school's current accommodation is unsatisfactory, despite the considerable improvements made to it over the years. In particular, the lack of a school hall inhibits the whole school coming together in pleasant surroundings, for example, for collective worship, and also means that the school has to use facilities elsewhere for physical education. Apart from the time loss this involves, it means that if outside physical education is rained off, then a classroom has to be used. There is no dedicated outdoor play area for the children at the Foundation Stage, which limits the promotion of their physical development. The school does not have a separate library or separate dedicated teaching space for small groups. There is no separate staff room. The school does, however, enjoy an exceptionally large site for the number of pupils, with a good playground and playing field.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. In order to address effectively the issues of the report, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- Ensure that the full National Curriculum for the Foundation Stage is provided for the children in Reception, with greater emphasis on developing their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative skills through talk, enquiry and play.
(Paragraphs 5, 14, 16, 48, 54, 55, 56)

The school should also plan to address the following less pressing issues

- a. Extend the opportunities for pupils to experience and appreciate aspects of their own culture and the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society as a whole.
(Paragraph 24)
- b. Ensure that the evaluations of the quality of teaching made by subject co-ordinators focus more sharply on what works well, what works less well and what needs to be improved.
(Paragraphs 39, 64)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	10
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	4	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	30	40	30	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 ten percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

In view of the fact that there were fewer than ten pupils taking the tests in 2002, and in order to ensure confidentiality, the numbers of boys and girls attaining NC Level 2 or above have been omitted.

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	26	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Average class size	14.5

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	103,851
Total expenditure	129,711
Expenditure per pupil	4,473
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,516
Balance carried forward to next year	21,049

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.2

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	30
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	15	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	90	10	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	90	10	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	85	15	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	100	0	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	85	15	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	100	0	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	90	10	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	90	10	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	90	10	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	95	5	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	15	25	0	15

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

48. The number of children starting school at the Foundation Stage (in the Reception class) each year is small and varies from year to year. Children's skills vary from one small group to another. However, most children start school with skills which are similar to those usually found nationally at this age. Their personal, social and emotional development is broadly average, as are their skills in language and their mathematical development. The children in Reception are taught together with those in Year 1. The youngest ones attend school part-time for the first term. At the time of the inspection, there was a total of 11 Reception children on roll, only five of whom were full time and present during the inspection. In response to the good teaching which they receive in personal, social and emotional development and the basic skills such as reading, writing and the use of numbers, children achieve well. As a result, almost all are set to exceed expectations (the *Early Learning Goals*) in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics by the time they move on to Year 1. The provision for the development of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative development is less secure. and the children do therefore not achieve as well as they could. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goals in these areas, but not exceed them.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. The good teaching successfully promotes children's confidence, independence and positive attitudes to learning. A safe, calm and secure atmosphere is provided, in which the adults treat one another and the children with respect, courtesy and politeness and the children respond accordingly. The teacher and support staff take care to model appropriate behaviour, setting a good example to the children. For example, a learning support assistant joins in class discussions with the children, putting up her hand and waiting her turn patiently to answer or ask questions. The pupils in Year 1 also set a good example of appropriate behaviour and positive attitudes to work and they help and encourage the younger children. The fact that activities are carefully matched to the children's needs and capabilities is important in promoting their enthusiasm for and enjoyment of learning. The appropriate work which they are given to do, particularly in reading and writing, ensures that they experience the satisfaction of completing tasks successfully and the stimulation of an appropriate level of challenge. This helps to give them self-confidence as well as promoting positive attitudes to school. The many good opportunities for the children to work together in pairs and groups, usually composed of both boys and girls and often a mixture of Reception and Year 1 children, promotes good relationships. The children play and work together well, sharing and taking turns sensibly. This was seen, for example, as they worked with a partner, taking turns to write words on their individual whiteboards in a writing lesson. They showed consideration for one another's efforts and a willingness to help. The children are given some good opportunities to work independently some of the time and they do so responsibly, getting on well as a group, without direct supervision. This was seen, for example, as they compared the lengths of different objects in a mathematics lesson.

Communication, language and literacy

50. There are many good opportunities for the children to develop good speaking and listening skills. These occur naturally as a part of most activities. The role-play activities provided in the 'doctor's surgery' also afford good opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. There are good regular opportunities for the children to practise their skills as they share their 'news' at the start of the day. They are encouraged to express their ideas, to ask and answer questions and to listen carefully to adults and to one another. They do so sensibly and thoughtfully, encouraged by the good example set by adults and the older children. In a good lesson which contributed well not only to their speaking and listening skills but also to their personal and emotional development, the teacher read a story and invited the children to talk about how the rabbit and the

hedgehog were feeling. The children responded enthusiastically, thinking carefully before offering ideas such as *sad, cold, worried* and *frightened*.

51. National guidance on teaching reading and writing (*The National Literacy Strategy*) is adapted and used well to plan the teaching of the basic skills. Reading is taught particularly well. The very clear and effective teaching of phonic skills gives the children some important skills and also promotes confidence in their own abilities. Because they acquire at an early stage a good understanding of the sounds that letters make and how these combine to make words, the children are soon able to tackle unfamiliar words for themselves. This is combined very effectively with teaching the children to recognise many common words, which they will meet frequently in their first reading books. Together, these techniques make for successful, confident readers, who have skills which exceed those usually found at this age.
52. The children are provided with plenty of good opportunities to develop their writing skills, not only in language sessions, but also as a part of their learning in many other areas. The children use their phonic skills well to help them to write letters and some simple words. They recognise when letters are (deliberately) written the wrong way round and enjoy correcting the teacher's 'mistake'. Almost all can write simple words such as *bed*, producing well-formed letters of good recognisable shape and regular size.

Mathematical development

53. Very good use is made of national guidance (*The National Numeracy Strategy*), suitably adapted, in planning the children's mathematical development. They are taught the number names and learn to use them in familiar contexts. They count objects to five and then to ten and put the numbers one to ten in the correct order. Most of the children are able to say a number that lies between two given numbers, identifying, for example, what comes between three and five. They understand and use mathematical vocabulary; for example, terms such as *more* and *less* and *longer* and *shorter*. They apply this understanding to practical situations; for example, sorting out and ordering sets of objects by length.

Knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development

54. The children learn such subjects as science, ICT, religious education, history and geography alongside the pupils in Year 1. This contributes to their knowledge and understanding of the world, but the approach to these lessons is inappropriate for children at the Foundation Stage. Too little emphasis is given to talk, first-hand experience and play. For example, in a science lesson on the sense of touch, which was seen during the inspection, the learning of the Reception children was limited by the nature of the work planned. Too little time was given for the children to investigate the sense of touch and too much emphasis was placed on understanding the difficult idea of a 'fair test', which is inappropriate to children of this age. They therefore gained much less than they might have done.
55. The approach to creative development is also too dominated by the subjects planned for pupils in Year 1. It lacks sufficient opportunities for the children to explore colour, texture, shape and sound and respond to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. For example, the work planned for music lessons on pitch, rhythm and tempo is more appropriate to the needs of pupils in Year 1.
56. The lack of a school hall, a dedicated safe play area for the children in Reception and appropriate large toys and other equipment for activities such as travelling, balancing and climbing means that the provision for the children's physical development is unsatisfactory. The school does its best to provide suitable experiences, for example through regular visits to use the facilities at another school nearby. There are some appropriate opportunities for the children to develop the control and co-ordination of their small muscles; for example, as they learn to hold a pencil correctly in writing lessons and use such tools as scissors and paint brushes in art.

ENGLISH

57. Standards cannot be judged securely in Year 2, as there are only two pupils in that year group. In Year 3, standards in speaking and listening and reading and writing are above average. This represents an improvement in speaking and listening and writing and the maintenance of good standards in reading since the previous inspection, just under five years ago. There are no great differences in the standards reached by boys and girls. In the most recent national tests and assessments in reading and writing those pupils who are now in Year 3 reached standards which were well above the national average and better than those reached in most similar schools. Judgements concerning how well pupils are performing compared with all pupils nationally and those in similar schools need to be treated with great caution where such small numbers of pupils are involved. The performance of one pupil represents over 12 percentage points of the total points scored in the tests.
58. Children start school with skills in communication, language and literacy which are broadly average, although these vary from year to year, depending on the particular characteristics of the small groups of children admitted. They get off to a strong start in Reception, soon learning the basic skills of reading and writing, and this is built on well in Years 2 and 3. In response to the good teaching they receive and because they have very positive attitudes to learning, pupils achieve well, making good progress.
59. Pupils in Year 1 responded enthusiastically to some stimulating opportunities for discussion; for example, as they talked about the characters in a story they had heard and suggested how they might feel. They used some lively, imaginative language. For example, one pupil suggested that the rabbit in the story was *wide eyed* because he was amazed at the snow. In Years 2 and 3 pupils benefit from some good planned opportunities for speaking and listening. For instance, they read play scripts, taking on the roles of the narrator and characters. They acted their parts expressively, for example announcing impressively, "*It's time for an adventure.*"
60. Reading is well taught throughout the school. By Year 3 most pupils read fluently, with good expression. They make few errors and usually correct themselves quickly when they do go wrong. In discussions with inspectors, pupils reported that they enjoy reading and they read at home, often to a parent or carer, as well as in school. Many can name a favourite children's author. They show good understanding of the stories they read and can talk about them confidently, discussing some of the characters and the plot. One pupil was able to offer thoughtful views on the characters in *The Twits* by Roald Dahl, for example. Pupils make very good use of the phonic skills, which they start to learn from their earliest days in school. Their good understanding of the sounds of letters and how they combine into words helps them to work out unfamiliar words for themselves and gives them independence and confidence. Even the least capable Year 3 readers have well-developed phonic skills. Most of the pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction. They use non-fiction books to search for information and also make good use of ICT, including CD ROMs and the Internet for research.
61. Pupils' good phonic skills help their spelling as well as their reading. In Year 1 spelling is good. Most pupils spell correctly a number of phonetically simple words, such as *sad* and *cold* and they make a good, plausible attempt at more complex words. For example, one pupil wrote that a character in the story was *worryd*. By Year 3 most pupils are confident spelling phonetically straightforward words. They add a prefix to letter combinations such as *un* and *ale* to spell words such as *stun* or *stale*. The most capable are very good at spelling complex words, using words like *season* correctly in their writing.
62. Pupils are taught good handwriting skills in Reception and Year 1. Most form their letters carefully and correctly, with good attention to size, shape and regularity. By Year 3 handwriting is good. It is joined up and legible. The good handwriting produced in handwriting exercise books is generally transferred to pupils' work in other subjects. Most pupils use commas and speech marks correctly to make their writing more lively and interesting. They write in a variety of styles and for different purposes. For example, they write factual accounts of the life of famous people from history, such as Florence Nightingale. They write about events and festivals in real life, such as Diwali, and

describe the function and symbolism of diva lamps. Pupils write about the importance of fruit and vegetables and vitamins as components of a healthy diet. They also write descriptively, for example about a wet playtime. They plan and write descriptive poems. The most capable pupils write persuasive arguments, for example for and against fats and sugars in the diet. They write clear instructions for others to follow; for example, setting out clearly the ingredients required and the processes involved in making a salad. Pupils are beginning to understand and make appropriate use of paragraphs.

63. The teaching is good and it promotes good learning and achievement, leading to above average standards. Teachers make very good use of *The National Literacy Strategy* to help them plan their lessons. They take appropriate care to adapt this national guidance to meet the needs of their pupils, particularly as there are two year groups in each class. Teachers keep a careful check on pupils' progress and what they know, understand and can do. They use carefully the information they gather to match work closely to pupils' learning needs and to set targets for achievement. Teachers' good understanding of how to teach reading and writing mean that pupils quickly acquire the basic skills, which are built on well in Years 2 and 3. The very good class control and relationships which teachers establish with their pupils mean that there is a good working atmosphere in lessons. Pupils feel secure and are able to concentrate on their work. They try hard to do their best and gain enjoyment and satisfaction from their work. This promotes good learning and achievement and also contributes strongly to pupils' very good personal development.
64. The subject co-ordinator manages the subject well in both this and the partnership school. She has very helpfully contributed to the establishment of a helpful culture in which regular checks on teaching, teachers' lesson planning and pupils' work are accepted and welcomed by her colleagues. There is now a need to improve the focus of the co-ordinator's monitoring to ensure that it identifies clearly strengths and weaknesses and sets out what needs to be done to bring about further improvement.

MATHEMATICS

65. Standards in the use of numbers, in shape, space and measures and in data handling are above average at the end of Year 3. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be in line with national averages. In response to the good quality teaching that they receive and because of their positive attitudes, pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Pupils attained well above average results in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 and the school's results were better than those of most similar schools. As the school has very small year groups there can be considerable year-to-year variation in the results of National Curriculum tests. These variations mean that care is necessary in interpreting the change in the school's National Curriculum results from one year to the next. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils have some appropriate opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in practical situations. For example, they use their knowledge and understanding of data handling as they compile and interpret databases in ICT.
66. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 3 is good. Both teachers begin their lessons at a brisk pace, continually challenging pupils to think and try hard, keeping them focused and attentive. They clearly explain the purpose of tasks, make it very clear what is expected of the pupils, and use effective questioning to probe and extend pupils' understanding. They also ensure that the teaching assistants are clear about their role in ensuring that all pupils take a full part in lessons and their learning needs are met. Pupils are encouraged to explain their methods and thinking. This helps deepen the pupils' understanding of their own learning.
67. Teachers keep a careful check on pupils' progress. They make very good use of the information that they gather in order to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are appropriately met, with work which is appropriate to their capabilities. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher used his assessment of pupils' learning very effectively to ensure that they were able to add and subtract numbers up to ten and make comparisons of two or more lengths. Pupils showed very good use of mathematical vocabulary, correctly using the terms *longer/shorter* and *longest/shortest*. In a good lesson in the Years 2 and 3 class pupils applied their knowledge of the five times table to counting

in units of time. Pupils used the random throw of a dice to move the hands of a clock in multiples of five minutes. They worked well co-operatively, encouraging one another to try for the right answer. The needs of those who find learning more difficult and the most capable were met well because the work was carefully planned to suit them. Teachers manage their classes very well, making some good use of rewards for good behaviour, and this ensures that pupils behave well and are able to get on and concentrate well.

68. No pupils were observed using ICT to support their learning during the inspection, but the analysis of pupils' books and wall displays showed that pupils had used ICT to support their numeracy skills in areas such as data handling. Opportunities for teaching and using numeracy across the curriculum are also being taken, such as the use of graphical skills in science lessons on materials and their properties in Years 2 and 3.
69. The co-ordinator is based at the partnership school. She is enthusiastic and manages the subject well. In order to develop the subject, she has attended courses on the National Numeracy Strategy and has worked closely with her colleagues and the school governors. She has helpfully been given the opportunity to monitor the development and teaching of mathematics. In this way she has had the opportunity to work alongside colleagues and give support. National test and assessment results have been appropriately analysed to monitor strengths and areas to develop in the subject.

SCIENCE

70. The inspection finds that standards are average at the end of Year 3. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This situation is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. The results of the 2002 teacher assessments showed that a very high proportion of the small group of pupils assessed reached expected levels for their age, whilst an average proportion reached higher levels. It must be stressed that very few pupils were involved in these assessments. Any judgements about standards based on these assessments must therefore be treated with great caution. There is likely to be considerable year-to-year variation in assessment results.
71. During the inspection, it was only possible to see one lesson in the Reception and Year 1 class. Year 1 pupils showed an appropriate level of skill in classifying living creatures according to similarities and differences. They were able to make predictions and test these against the outcomes of their experiments. Pupils attempted to carry out a fair test and showed an understanding of what this implied. In testing which parts of the body are most sensitive to touch, by the application of a piece of sandpaper, pupils found difficulties in conducting a fair test and recording their findings.
72. The analysis of pupils' work showed that in Year 3, attainment in practical and investigative science and the use of fair tests is generally in line with the national average. Pupils record their work in writing and with drawings. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 have studied growing plants as part of their study of Life Processes and Living Things. They observed and drew a plant and labelled the major parts and recognised that different plants and animals will be found in different habitats. They described the similarities and differences in plant and animal types when they sorted and classified them into groups. Pupils apply their ideas to everyday contexts, predict what is likely to happen before they investigate, test their reasons based on systematic observations and suggest ways to improve their work.
73. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. The one lesson seen was satisfactory, although it served the needs of Year 1 pupils better than those in Reception. It was well planned to meet the needs of those in Year 1. The teacher made very clear to pupils what they were to do and learn, so that they responded with an enthusiastic, positive attitude. Teachers take good care to check on pupils' attainment and progress. They make very good use of the information that they gather to ensure that the work set matches the learning needs of all pupils. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and appropriate targets are set for each pupil. The teaching is appropriately based on national guidance, suitably adapted to the needs of the school, with its

small classes and mixed age groups. Due to the small year groups and mixed age groups, science is taught as part of a two-year rolling programme that ensures equal access and coverage for every pupil.

74. The management of the subject is good. The newly appointed co-ordinator has had time to monitor teaching and learning and to work alongside colleagues in both this and the partnership school. Pupils' work has been helpfully analysed to identify strengths and areas to develop in the subject. There are useful examples of pupils' work at different National Curriculum levels, which help teachers in their assessment of standards and progress. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

75. Judgements are based on the one lesson seen during the inspection, work on display and discussion with the co-ordinator and pupils. This indicates that standards are broadly average by the end of Year 3 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. The previous inspection identified standards that were above average, but the year groups are very small and standards differ year-on-year.
76. Work on display shows that all pupils develop an appropriate range of skills. Pupils in Year 1 experiment with colour and pattern to produce attractive sponge prints for Christmas wrapping paper. They use their imagination well to produce drawings based on a small picture from a magazine. As was identified in the previous inspection, pupils continue to use the subject in other curricular areas; for example, in mathematics to illustrate number patterns and symmetry and in religious education to depict items brought for Harvest Festival.
77. Older pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 show good attention to detail in their paintings of a Hindu God. They use group portraits by well-known artists as a stimulus for their own work on portraits to depict relationships, using pastels and paint appropriately. Older pupils use ICT well to support the subject. For example, 'Rangoli' patterns, relating to work in religious education, show a good understanding of colour. Attractive stained glass window Christmas cards show that pupils know how to use programs to design their patterns.
78. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching overall. In the one lesson seen for the older pupils, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Here, the teacher stressed the importance of planning a picture and ensuring that the subject matter filled the paper. The pupils gasped in wonder at the size of the paper and worked well in small groups to produce pictures to illustrate an activity they enjoyed doing with friends. Good relationships ensured that pupils settled to the task well and worked hard to compose their pictures. The teacher noticed pupils who were struggling to draw facial features and sensitively intervened to draw attention to their own features. However, the opportunity to give focused teaching of skills in the very small class was sometimes missed.
79. The school uses national guidance appropriately to ensure that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically as they move through the school. Management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator manages the subject in the school and also in the partnership school nearby. This sensible sharing of responsibilities in very small schools means that the co-ordinator has fewer curricular responsibilities than might be the case and, as a result, has good opportunities to monitor teaching and standards in the subject. Resources are satisfactory and displays around the school celebrate the pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology as the subject was not being taught this half term. Judgements are based on an analysis of a small amount of pupils' work, teachers' planning documents, photographic evidence and a scrutiny of a few products that pupils have made. These indicate that standards are average at the end of Year

3 and that pupils' achievement is sound. No judgement was made on standards at the time of the last inspection.

81. Pupils have had some appropriate experience of evaluating the use and limitations of different materials as well as joining and assembling. They have designed and made simple mechanisms with moving parts. Pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class have looked at various forms of packaging in a study of structures. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 have created their own sandwich snacks in their study of food technology.
82. The analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils are encouraged to give careful thought to the design of their product and that they modify and improve their designs in the light of simple evaluations. A governor had supported the school in design technology by demonstrating the safe use of tools to pupils, together with demonstrating various ways of joining wood in a project to construct photo frames.
83. The management of design and technology is good. The co-ordinator works hard to encourage and support other teachers informally and has monitored the teaching or development of the subject for at least a year. She has assembled samples of pupils' work from Years 1 to 3 and this enables her to have an overview of what is taught and the standards reached. A successful and enjoyable joint curriculum day in June 2002 involved pupils from Frettenham and Hainford schools in various design and technology projects.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

84. No geography or history lessons were seen during the two days of the inspection. Inspection judgements are based on an analysis of samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning documents, and photographic evidence. This evidence shows that standards are average in Year 3 and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is a similar situation to that at the time of the last inspection.
85. In geography, Reception and Year 1 pupils make a study of the local area around the school, whilst pupils in Years 2 and 3 study the weather, comparing it in various locations around the world. In history, pupils are developing a sound understanding of chronology and of historical facts. In Year 3, they know the main events associated with the Great Fire of London in 1666 and the significance of Samuel Pepys and his diary. They recall some of the important events in the life of Florence Nightingale. They have a sound understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources of historical evidence.
86. From the analysis of pupils' work it is evident that the quality of teaching and learning over time results in satisfactory achievement. In both subjects work is suitably modified so that it meets the needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and the most able. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop their enquiry skills and to use their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills.
87. The management of both subjects is good. The co-ordinator has taken good advantage of time that has been allocated to monitor the development of both subjects and to work alongside colleagues. She is aware of the strengths and areas for development in the teaching of the subjects. The use of assessment to inform planning and to track pupils' progress is good. The use of ICT and numeracy to support the subjects is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

88. Standards in ICT are average in Year 3. They are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. There are no differences between the standards reached by boys and girls, who enjoy their ICT opportunities equally and try equally hard. Pupils' achievement is sound. They have appropriate opportunities to use their ICT skills as they learn in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, they use ICT to analyse the data on recycling materials which they have gathered in science lessons and word process some of their work on playscripts in English lessons.

89. Pupils in Year 1 are taught to use simple graphs and pictograms. In Year 3 they competently sort information that they have entered into a computer database. They present the information graphically and print it out successfully in the form of different graphs, such as bar charts and pie diagrams. The teacher's good subject knowledge is evident as she gives a clear explanation and demonstration of how to use a database, recapping helpfully and clearly on pupils' learning from previous lessons. Teachers' skills and those of support staff have been well enhanced by good quality training which has been undertaken recently for teachers in this and the partnership schools.
90. Pupils learn enthusiastically in response to the good quality, well-informed teaching and show positive attitudes. They recall clearly what a database is and what can be done with it – for example, that it can be used to store information in a number of different fields about things like the gender, hair and eye colour and other characteristics of a group of children. Learning is encouraged and enhanced by the availability of good-quality resources, including new laptops and printers, although the laptops do not yet have all the software loaded which they will need if they are to be used to full effect.
91. Pupils in Year 3 are able independently to access a database that they have previously created. They can call up records, sort them by various fields, such as eye colour or height, and select an appropriate tool to represent graphically the information stored.
92. The subject is managed soundly by a co-ordinator who leads the subject in both this and the partnership school.

MUSIC

93. No overall judgement can be made about standards in music or the quality of teaching. This is because only two brief lessons were taught during the inspection. They were both singing lessons.
94. Pupils in Year 1 know that they need to take deep breaths when they are going to sing. They enjoy singing to the teacher's guitar accompaniment and do so reasonably tunefully. They join in with the actions enthusiastically. The teacher's clear explanation helps pupils to gain a good understanding of some different types of song; for example, what a lullaby is.
95. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 are very attentive and try hard as they sing songs from their Christmas concert. One girl sings a solo confidently and sweetly, whilst the others listen carefully, sensibly and with interest and appreciation. Both boys and girls try hard when it is their turn to sing and adopt an appropriately soft tone as they sing a lullaby.
96. The management of music is sound. It benefits from the co-ordinator working also in the partnership school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. No judgement can be made about physical education, as no lessons were taught during the inspection. The school has no hall, which restricts the teaching of dance and gymnastics, but every effort is made to compensate for this by using the facilities at a nearby school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98. By the end of Year 3, pupils attain standards that are in line with and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils have good attitudes to different faiths and are gaining a sound understanding of them. Evidence is based on one lesson seen during the inspection, examination of work on display and in books and discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator.

99. Pupils in Year 1 understand the reasons for the celebration of the Harvest Festival. They begin to learn about the similarities and differences between the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Christian faiths. They know that the Qu'ran and the Bible are special books. They have a good introduction to symbolism used in religion to show 'belonging'. Older pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 understand the main features of the festival of Diwali and know that Laschmi was a God and gave wealth through their study of Hinduism. They have an appropriate understanding of Christian traditions and can relate the main features of well-known Bible stories. They understand the main features of Remembrance Day ceremonies, knowing the importance of poppies, the two-minute silence, the parades and the wreath-laying ceremonies.
100. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. However, in the lesson seen for the younger pupils, the quality of teaching was good. Here, the teacher effectively linked festivals of the Jewish, Hindu and Sikh faiths, stressing the importance of celebrating as a family. Effective teaching enabled the pupils to relate their own experiences of birthdays to understand the celebration of the birth of Christ.
101. Management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator manages the subject in the school and also in the partnership school nearby. This sensible sharing of responsibilities in very small schools means that the co-ordinator has fewer curricular responsibilities than might be the norm and, as a result, has good opportunities to monitor teaching and standards in the subject. Resources are satisfactory and displays of artefacts are arranged with due respect.