

INSPECTION REPORT

All Saints C.E.V.A. Primary School

Newmarket

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124761

Headteacher: Mr B Bell

Lead inspector: Mrs J Nelson

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th November 2003

Inspection number: 255319

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
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	145
School address:	Vicarage Road Newmarket Suffolk
Postcode:	CB8 8JE
Telephone number:	01638 662835
Fax number:	01638 560306
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Jaggard
Date of previous inspection:	11 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small Church of England First Primary School mainly serves its local community in Newmarket, although some pupils come from other areas of the town. Pupils are taught in six single age classes. Children start the school at age four with skills and levels of development that are broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average and the number with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.

Most pupils have white British backgrounds but the number whose mother tongues are not English is higher than in most schools. The area around the school is socially diverse with some pockets of social disadvantage. The eligibility of pupils for free school meals is similar to the national average.

Since 2000 the school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards:

- DfES School Achievement Award -2000
- Artsmark - 2001
- Investors in People -2002
- Young Enterprise Award - 2003

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20991	Jane Nelson	Lead inspector	Science, Geography, History, Special educational needs, English as an additional language
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector	
21095	Lyn Adair	Team inspector	Foundation Stage of Learning, Mathematics, Physical education, Music
20948	John Linstead	Team inspector	English, Information and communication technology, Art and design, Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

All Saints is an effective school. Teaching is good. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with a strength in the way the headteacher, staff team and governors successfully work together to foster the school's educational aims and Christian values. This ethos enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well so the standards pupils reach in English, mathematics and science, by age nine, are better than expected. The school provides good value for the funding it receives.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for English, science, art and design, design and technology and physical education are good and pupils achieve well in these subjects.
- Teaching has significant strengths in Years 3 and 4.
- There is a very good range of activities outside lessons that enrich pupils' learning.
- Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and pupils are proud of their school.
- A small number of pupils find it hard to settle down to work and this is not always managed as well as it could be.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for younger pupils to develop independence in their learning, for instance in recording work for themselves rather than completing worksheets.
- The leadership team's evaluations of teaching and learning are not sufficiently well organised to easily identify improvement priorities.

Improvement has been satisfactory since the 1998 inspection. Then, standards required improvement, particularly for more able pupils in mathematics and science. This has been achieved well, with better success in national tests and teacher assessments at age seven, and improvement in the depth and quality of nine-year-olds' work. Issues regarding punctuality and pupils' reports have both been improved. There has been partial success in tackling two issues of improving pupils' behaviour and cutting back on photocopied worksheets.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

All Saints' results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	D	D	B	B
writing	B	B	A	A
mathematics	D	C	B	B

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Achievement is good. In Year 2 national tests in 2003, there has been an improvement in standards. All pupils gained the expected standards, exceeding national averages. At the more advanced level, results were above national ones in reading, well above in writing and matched national results in mathematics and science. Children mainly start the school with average language and number skills and make sound progress in achieving the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year (Foundation Stage). Good achievement in Year 2 is maintained in Years 3 and 4, so when pupils leave, standards in English, mathematics and science exceed those usually seen for nine-year-olds. Pupils are also achieving well in art and design, design and technology and physical education, and exceeding expected standards because of good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs, and those at an early stage in learning English, achieve well as they are well supported in their learning.

Pupils' personal qualities are developed well and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good as are pupils' attitudes to school and learning. Behaviour is satisfactory because some pupils find it difficult to concentrate on their lessons, which occasionally slows down learning for the class.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Overall, teaching and learning are good with particular strengths in Years 3 and 4. Lessons are thoroughly planned and, in the best of them, teachers capture pupils' interest by using role-play, dramatic posters, artefacts and imaginative activities, all of which heighten pupils' keenness to learn. Satisfactory but less effective lessons did not use the best tactics to settle pupils to work and missed opportunities for them to select ways of working. The curriculum is broad, meets all statutory requirements and is enriched by the very good range of activities in the arts, humanities and sport that teachers and other adults provide outside lessons. This enlivens pupils' learning and lifts their achievement. The quality of education is enhanced by the very good partnerships with parents and the community, and good standards of care and guidance for pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are both satisfactory. The governors are very supportive, actively involved and provide effective governance. The school is competently led and managed with strengths in the way the headteacher has developed its teamwork and educational values. The leadership team's school self-evaluation programme includes monitoring teaching, learning and standards. However, this has not been carried out firmly enough to remedy some known weaknesses, or plan improvements with a clear focus on the quality of education. There is good financial management and an initiative, whereby the school has taken over the lunchtime catering, has been particularly successful and cost effective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and feel their children are well taught and make good progress. They value the leadership of the headteacher and the commitment and hard work of the staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel happy, secure and enjoy their lessons. Some feel that other pupils don't always behave well enough and older pupils would like to have more ways to express their views about school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Ensure consistent use of the school's procedures for managing behaviour.
- Provide children in reception and Years 1 and 2 with more choice and independence in their learning and in the way they record their work.
- Develop more effective systems for school self-evaluation and use these to drive school improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good in the school overall. By the end of Year 4, standards in the core subjects are better than usually seen for nine-year-olds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Able pupils' achievement has increased since the last inspection and is particularly good in Years 3 and 4.
- Good provision in art and design, design and technology and physical education promotes good standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs are helped to achieve well.
- In Reception and Year 1 & 2 opportunities are missed for choice and independence in learning, and in varying the way pupils record their work, and this is hindering achievement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.7 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.2 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection standards in English, mathematics and science have risen. A key issue for the school then was to raise the attainment of able pupils in mathematics and science. Teachers have succeeded in this, and in improving reading and writing standards. They ensure that the education they provide challenges more able pupils to achieve well, as well as enabling lower attaining pupils to reach average standards.

2. Information gathered over several years on children's language and number skills when they start school at the age of four, indicates that these are broadly average. Samples of the work done by the present Year 1 pupils when they were in Reception class show good achievement in gaining or exceeding the goals in communication, language and literacy, and sound achievement in mathematical development. In terms of gaining all the learning goals for their age, they had made sound progress during their first year in school. Learning for the current Reception children mirrors this pattern of achievement: Good literacy teaching is helping children to learn well and move on faster than expected; sound teaching in the other areas of learning is resulting in steady progress and there is scope for children to take a more active part in organising their learning.

3. The school sets targets for pupils' performance in national tests. In 2003 these were exceeded in reading, writing and mathematics by a large margin. Results were the best for the school since 2000 and all the pupils gained at least the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, results in reading and mathematics were better than provisional national results, and writing standards were well above national results. At the more advanced level 3, results were above national ones in reading, well above in writing and matched national results in mathematics and science. The school's data confirms that this year group of pupils have achieved well from an average starting point when they entered the reception class.

4. Comparisons of national test results for seven-year-olds show that the school has followed an upward trend similar to the national one. Over a three-year period, standards in reading were lower than national ones, while in writing standards exceeded those in most other schools, and in mathematics they matched those in schools nationally.
5. Inspection evidence, from lesson observations, sampling pupils' work, displays in classrooms and discussions with pupils, shows that standards of the present seven-year-olds (Year 2) are above average in reading, writing, and science, and average in mathematics.
6. Pupils do not take any national tests when they leave the school at the end of Year 4 as tests for this stage of education are taken at the end of Year 6. The standards of nine-year-olds (Year 4) in English, mathematics and science are above average. This group of pupils have achieved particularly well in reading and mathematics compared to their test results in Year 2. Since the last inspection the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, developments in teaching, and the good arrangement for literacy and numeracy skills to be used in other subjects have all helped to raise standards. Good teaching also helps pupils to gain good skills of scientific enquiry as they apply their knowledge and understanding to investigations.
7. In English, additional time is allocated to reading beyond daily literacy lessons for pupils who need to make up ground. Extra skills development sessions from Year 1 onwards have clearly had an impact on reading achievement, judged on the most recent national tests and the standards older pupils are reaching. Other pupils with special needs, or who are at an early stage of acquiring English, are achieving well because teachers plan suitable work and teaching assistants support pupils closely in carrying it out. Writing standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school because teachers encourage them to write freely in several subjects. There are numerous examples of writing of a good standard, in Year 3 and 4 pupils' books.
8. In information and communication technology, Year 2 pupils are reaching standards that are in line with those expected of pupils of this age. By the time pupils leave the school they have built satisfactorily on their earlier experiences and are reaching standards expected of pupils of this age.
9. Pupils of all abilities also achieve well in art and design, design and technology, and physical education as they move through the school. Teachers' subject expertise and the additional curriculum opportunities they provide in these subjects are having a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. Examples of Year 2 pupils' skills in art and design show well-observed drawings and painted pictures. Their gymnastics skills are also better than usually seen at this age. By the age of nine pupils' knowledge and skills in these subjects are better than usual and, for a significant minority, well above expectations in art and design, and design and technology.
10. In geography, history and music it was not possible to make overall judgements on standards and pupils' achievement. However, in history and geography the standards of written work sampled were at least in line with expectations.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **good**. Their attendance is good. Pupils' behaviour is **satisfactory**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance is above the national average.
- Pupils show a high level of interest in their school.
- The school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment.
- Pupils' spiritual and social development are good and cultural awareness is very good.
- Some pupils are slow to settle and concentrate in lessons.

Commentary

11. Attendance at the school is above the national average and is therefore good. Unauthorised absence improved last year from above to below the national average because the school monitors this closely with the Education Welfare Officer. The school works hard to encourage children to come to school and to arrive on time and few pupils are late to school. This is an improvement on the findings in the previous inspection. There were two fixed period exclusions relating to one pupil in the year prior to the inspection.

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are good, they are eager to come to school and participate in all aspects of school life including the many after school clubs, plus the well-attended pre and after school "Wacky Snacky Club". They enjoy practical work and find the activities provided to support learning are exciting, for example the visit they made to West Stow to discover the Anglo-Saxons. Pupils are encouraged to think of others by raising money for charities.

13. Behaviour is satisfactory. Around the school and on the playground pupils are polite and behave well. In class, some pupils find it hard to settle to work and some staff do not always use the best tactics to get the best behaviour. Pupils' moral development is satisfactory. They are not involved in making the school or classroom rules, although they do have an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and do understand the consequences of their actions. The school has a suitable policy on promoting racial harmony, which is reflected in the warm relationships between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. At the pre-inspection parents meeting, parents spoke favourably of the schools "zero tolerance" when dealing with any bullying. Pupils confirmed that they trusted all the adults in the school to help them at any time. They are confident of not being bullied and aware of what to do should they have any problems.

14. Pupils' spiritual development is good and is particularly enhanced through assemblies where they are given the opportunity to reflect meaningfully on the themes. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own culture. For instance, opportunities for them to visit museums, and in art to study the work of a range of artists such as Arcimboldo, Seurat and Picasso result in growing cultural awareness. Experiences, in assemblies and lessons are also helping them to understand life within a diverse society.

15. Pupils' social development is good; they have good relationships with each other and all adults in the school. They work well together in pairs and in groups, taking account of each other's views. Lower down the school opportunities for initiative are limited although when given the opportunity pupils respond very well. There are some opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility as they move up the school; they respond well to these opportunities. Pupils are confident when talking to adults and express their views with clarity and self-assurance. There is no school council although this way of seeking pupils' views has been tried in the past.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Exclusions

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	116	2	
White – any other White background	6		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3		
Mixed – White and Asian	4		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3		
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	2		
No ethnic group recorded	7		

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is good. The curriculum is broad and satisfactory and pupils' learning is enriched by a very good range and quality of activities provided beyond lessons. The accommodation and resources are good overall and benefit pupils' learning. There are good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Very good links are made with parents, the community and other local schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good, with some significant strengths in Years 3 and 4.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is enabling pupils to learn and achieve well.
- Planning is thorough and often imaginative for lessons in science, the arts and humanities.
- The introductory sections of lessons are mainly taught well.
- Teaching assistants are knowledgeable, work in strong partnership with teachers and contribute effectively to pupils' learning.
- Pupils mostly try hard and work productively as individuals and groups; however a minority do not settle well to lessons and sometimes teachers do not use the best tactics to remedy this.
- Pupils' recorded work is mainly good, but not in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 where there is over- reliance on commercial worksheets.
- Opportunities are missed in younger year groups to extend independence in learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	17	10	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

16. The impact of teaching in the long term is enabling children, who have broadly average skills when they start school, to achieve well and exceed expected standards in the core subjects. On a few occasions during the inspection, lessons that had been thoroughly and often imaginatively planned did not fulfil their promise, as a small number of pupils did not behave sensibly. The flow of the lessons was interrupted and the behaviour policy was not consistently applied to remedy this.
17. Positive features of teaching have largely been maintained since the last inspection and a similar amount of good teaching was observed during this inspection. In reception and Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning observed was balanced between good and satisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 teaching and learning were predominantly good with a few lessons very well taught.
18. Children are well managed in reception. Literacy teaching and learning are good, helping children to make good progress over the course of a year. The encouragement they get to listen attentively and respond verbally is enabling the good development of their vocabularies and sentence construction. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the other five areas of learning. Sometimes, such as in mathematical development, activities are not challenging enough for more able children. Elsewhere, opportunities are missed for children to take the initiative as part of developing independence in learning.
19. In Years 1 to 4, good lesson planning is a common feature. Teachers' introductions to lessons explain clearly to pupils what they are to learn and, in the best lessons, set out to capture their interest, for instance through using role-play, dramatic posters and interesting artefacts. Particularly in science, art, history and design and technology lessons this was followed with practical activities that were intellectually and creatively demanding. In the main, pupils responded positively and learned well from these experiences. For instance, in a Year 4 design and technology lesson where learning was very good, the teacher had high expectations of pupils' reasoning, creative and evaluative thinking skills. Pupils' ideas were probed all through the lesson with questions emphasising 'how will you?' All responded by thinking independently and creating imaginative design solutions to the task of making a pizza topping survey.
20. In Years 1 and 2, improvement points were identified in the satisfactorily taught lessons. Teachers question pupils carefully to deepen their understanding, but do not vary methods readily to involve more pupils in answering, for instance through brief, paired discussions or using individual white boards. Teachers ensure pupils use their literacy skills when writing about their learning in other subjects but activities in English lessons are rather restricted and inclined toward pupils completing worksheets. In mathematics, pupils are not being challenged to record their mathematical thinking independently. Recording is on separate worksheets and there is little comment, making it difficult to track pupils' progress.
21. The long-term success of teaching and teachers' high expectations of pupils in Years 3 and 4, were confirmed in the samples of pupils' work that were examined. These were mainly better in quality and quantity than usually seen for these age groups. Strengths included the depth of work teachers expected from more able pupils in science, and good use of literacy and to a lesser extent mathematical skills in other subjects.
22. Teaching assistants make important contributions to learning. The school's decision to invest in this extra assistance is being well repaid and is successfully supporting its aim of providing inclusive education. The group activities led by assistants to support pupils who need additional literacy help are well run and are clearly having an impact on improving standards. The partnership between teachers and assistants is very effective, particularly when supporting a few pupils with challenging behaviour. In one excellent instance observed, the very positive support of the assistant and the teacher enabled a reluctant learner to become keenly and fully involved in the lesson and be proud of successfully completing the activity. Elsewhere, a teacher's knowledge of a pupil's special needs ensured that the correct tactics were used to help the youngster learn as part of the whole class group. There is similarly good support provided for the small number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

23. Assessment procedures are similar to those seen at the last inspection and good overall. In the reception, observational assessments are well documented and the national 'e-Profile' computer program for assessment is being used effectively. In the rest of the school, procedures are varied and suitably balanced between tracking pupils' progress in the National Curriculum year-on-year, and assessing learning in lessons to give pupils feedback and plan future work. Teachers' marking is a good feature for most subjects. Pupils are praised for work well done, further questions are raised and points for improvement made. In English and mathematics improvement targets are usefully identified for groups of pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs have well focused individual education plans. These are mainly to support learning in literacy and behaviour improvement and are being used effectively to help pupils overcome their difficulties.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad curriculum that is **satisfactory** and supported by a **very good** range of activities that enrich the curriculum for pupils both in and out of lessons. The level of staffing, accommodation and resources provides **good** support for learning. The positive features of the curriculum have been maintained satisfactorily since the last inspection and the curriculum continues to meet the pupils' needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very good range of opportunities for enriching the curriculum.
- A good personal, health and social education programme has been developed.
- There is effective liaison with pre-school and middle schools to aid transition.
- Teaching assistants are well qualified and well trained to support pupils.
- It is not clear in plans where key skills such as ICT support learning in other subjects.
- Outdoor provision for reception children creates some barriers to learning.

Commentary

24. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and provides a sound basis for pupils' learning. The school also uses, and has adapted, the national frameworks for Literacy and Numeracy as a basis for planning how these skills will be taught. This has brought about improvement in both English and mathematics standards. However, opportunities have been missed to develop an effective overview of the curriculum as a whole in order to identify links between subjects much more clearly. Some key skills clearly support work in other subjects, for example writing skills are applied well in geography and history, but these are not clearly shown in curriculum plans. This means too that opportunities are sometimes missed to employ key skills in ICT to support work in other subjects.

25. The school succeeds in making the curriculum interesting and enjoyable for pupils through provision of a very good range of experiences that support learning. Visits to areas of local interest bring alive the curriculum for pupils in a range of subject. Visitors help to support learning in lessons. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Year 3 were taught rugby skills by a specialist coach. Many pupils are keen to take part in other enriching activities that take place out of school time, such as recorders, art, chess and a wide range of sporting activities.

26. Curriculum planning meets the needs of different groups of pupils and individuals are well considered. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their academic and personal development is supported through clearly set out individual plans, groupings and deployment of staff. The needs of pupils with statements are well met, and their annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. Pupils with English at an early stage of acquisition are also given good support during lessons so that they work well alongside their classmates. More able pupils are given opportunities to develop their skills. For example, the school runs an after school club in art for pupils with particular talent in the subject. In mathematics, pupils have been able to attend specialist lessons at a different location to extend their skills.

27. The school has developed a good programme of support for pupils' personal development, which is currently being embedded in specifically defined and taught lessons. However, it is also woven into other parts of the curriculum, such as science, when pupils study health related topics.
28. Good links exist with the pre-school on the school site that ensure a smooth start to children's entry into school. Effective curriculum links have also been established with the middle schools to ensure an efficient transfer at the end of Year 4.
29. Internal accommodation is spacious, particularly in the reception class. Attractive displays, especially in art, enhance the learning environment. Good quality outdoor grassed and hard-surfaced play areas help to ensure productive play at break times, and some challenge in the form of safe but more adventurous play equipment. The outdoor space for reception children, however, is small, narrow and cramped. This limits the opportunities for these children to work on a larger scale.
30. Resources are satisfactory overall, and in several subjects their range and quality are good. The library though is small and cramped and some books are not in very good condition. A small computer room has been developed and each class has timetabled access but there is little additional ICT equipment in classes or other areas to extend learning in a range of subjects.
31. The school has a good level of experienced teaching staff. Teaching assistants are well-trained and well-qualified to offer effective support for pupils, particularly for those with specific needs. A close partnership between teaching staff and assistants helps to support pupils effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very strong procedures in the Foundation Stage (reception) for understanding and acting upon pupils' needs.
- There are good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- The procedures for seeking and acting upon pupils' views are not well defined.

Commentary

32. The school has good health and safety procedures in place. Staff and governors undertake termly health and safety checks, the outcomes of which are then prioritised for action. Risk assessment is carried out regularly. There is a well-trained child protection officer who undertakes regular training and who ensures that all staff are kept up to date with the policy and procedures. Through regular discussions, staff are kept aware of the need to inform her should they have any concerns. Arrangements for the provision of first aid and for the care of pupils who are unwell are good, this helps pupils feel safe and secure whilst in school.

33. Pupils form good and trusting relationships with adults in the school. Staff know individuals well and this ensures that pupils feel confident that they always have someone to turn to for help and advice. This good relationship was seen in a discussion on keeping safe with the youngest children. The teacher was able to draw each child into conversation by recalling small personal details that were important to them. Pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and discussions with them, confirmed pupils' confidence in the staff. Those pupils who have additional needs, including those who are vulnerable, have well focused individual plans for their development. There are satisfactory procedures in place for the school to take account of pupils' views. Pupils who receive merits at the Friday assembly are invited to take tea with the headteacher, who uses this opportunity to discuss issues with them. However, pupils spoken to were unclear about any other processes that allowed them to give their views, or how much note was taken of these views.

34. There are good induction procedures in place for children starting at the school, which are enhanced by the very good relationship with the local pre-school provision. This allows all children to

come into school and meet their teacher before they start and as a result they settle in quickly and happily.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **very good**. There are very good links with other schools and with the local community. The school's provision for family learning is **good**.

Main strengths

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- Links with other schools are very strong.
- Links with the community are wide-ranging.
- Family learning provision has a positive effect on pupils' achievements.

Commentary

35. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school; the school works very well with the parents, encouraging them to support their children at home by giving curriculum information and by running courses, organised by Adult Education, so that they can help their children with numeracy. Parents are also supportive by organising events, which raise funds for the school through the Friends Association.

36. The school provides a very good range of information for parents, regularly letting them know what is happening in school as well as informing them of events. Parents confirm that they are happy with the quality of information provided.

37. In response to the parents' questionnaire, a few parents felt they had too little information about their children's progress. The inspection finds that there are very frequent opportunities for parents to meet staff informally, for instance through the weekly Friday "Talk Back" sessions where parents can look at work and speak to staff. Also through formal consultation evenings to discuss progress. Parents of younger pupils praised the quality of the home-school contact books and the detailed responses of teachers to their comments. Parents who have children with significant additional needs expressed how much they valued the support they and their children receive from the school. Written annual reports have improved since the last inspection. They inform parents about their children's achievements, give information about effort, but do not highlight development points.

38. There are very good links with the local pre-school provision, which has a positive impact on the way in which pupils settle when they start at the school. There are also very good links with other schools in the local area, particularly with the Middle School where there is an exchange of staff and work tasks allocated to Year 4 pupils before they transfer. Links with the local cluster of schools include good curricular collaboration. Year 4 pupils' dance expertise and performance skills are currently being developed through working with other local schools and a professional dance teacher. During the inspection, staff and pupils from the Upper School came in and gave an entertaining assembly. Such exchanges of visits and visitors help pupils when transferring between schools.

39. The school has very good links with the wider community, including a Business Enterprise link with Stetchworth Farm Estates, which enhances pupils' learning opportunities. There are a very good range of visits and visitors including regular visits from the community police and fire service officers. There are strong links with the local church, which parents value and which add significantly to the spiritual, moral and social elements of the school's ethos.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are both **satisfactory**, so that standards and the quality of education since the last inspection have been improved or maintained. The governing body carries out its role well. The leadership team are competent and there is a strong sense of teamwork throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have a good knowledge of the school and play a significant role in shaping its development.
- There is effective teamwork between all members of the school community.
- The school has applied the principles of best value very effectively in establishing its own provision for school meals.
- The school's plans for improvement lack focus on standards, teaching and learning.
- The monitoring of teaching is not tightly organised or thoroughly analysed.

Commentary

40. The governing body is well organised and plays a full part in the school. Governors keep themselves well informed through the regular visits they make, the good training they have received and the communications they have with school staff. Several governors are also involved with the school on a daily basis, including running clubs and a Young Enterprise scheme. This means they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and offer informed support and challenge. For example, in the very demanding targets to improve reading standards that have been successfully accomplished. Governors and senior staff have successfully carried out the policy of maintaining a staff made up of experienced and 'new' teachers. This provides stability, while at the same time a range of experience and enthusiasm.

41. The headteacher's leadership is satisfactory with several strong features. He is well respected by the school community, has parents trust and has been successful in building a strong sense of teamwork among all school staff. This is well illustrated by the voluntary commitment of teaching assistants to participating in comprehensive training in information and communication technology skills. Staff and governors recognise the headteacher's contribution in raising the profile of the school locally and in the continuing growth in school numbers. His successful approach is to ensure everyone in the school community feels valued and is able to contribute to the very good ethos established.

42. Despite these good features some key elements of the leadership of school-self evaluation are weak. The headteacher observes teachers at work in the classroom and provides individual feedback. However, information from this monitoring, and that of subject co-ordinators, is not being drawn together and analysed to establish a clear picture of teaching and learning across the school. It is not clearly identifying areas for development, nor setting targets and noting ways in which improvements can be brought about. Two issues related to classroom practice that were identified at the last inspection have not been dealt with vigorously enough and still need further action.

43. The school is managed competently. Training needs are identified through the school's performance management systems, although not always directly linked to school priorities for improvement. Performance management systems have been extended so that all teaching assistants are included. The school has achieved the Investors in People status and continues to provide training in management skills, for example for subject co-ordinators and behaviour management skills for midday supervisors. All members of staff recently achieved 'Schoolsafe' awards. The school plays host to student teachers and is a recommending body for the accreditation of graduate teachers. It provides good support for teachers new to the profession and to its own teaching staff.

44. The monitoring of teaching and learning by some subject leaders is good but in other instances it lacks depth. For example, teachers observed in English lessons have been given thorough feedback with specific points for improvement but elsewhere written feedback has been sketchy. The support for teachers in science, design and technology and art and design is good enabling high standards to be achieved.

45. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. New policies, such as that for racial equality are in place and influencing the school's work. The governing body plays a part in identifying ways in which the school can improve and also ensures that parents have the opportunity to add their views on what needs to be altered. The school's development plan, to carry out these improvements reflect these ideas appropriately but, there are too many initiatives identified for the given timescale, these are not prioritised sufficiently well, nor linked directly to raising standards. The plan does not show any planning for longer-term goals.

46. The school's finances are well managed and there is a very good appreciation of the principles of best value. This is very effectively illustrated in the success of the takeover of provision for school meals, which has resulted in a high quality of food being offered at a cheaper rate than previously. In addition the revenue raised has enabled the school to buy furniture and resources and add to the school's income generally. The school has successfully funded a considerable increase in the number of learning support assistants employed by the school. This has contributed significantly to the quality of education provided and the gradual rise in standards achieved. However, the leadership team has not been sufficiently forward thinking to provide new ICT equipment when obsolete computers have been removed.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	363044
Total expenditure	375917
Expenditure per pupil	2685

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24328
Balance carried forward to the next	11455

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the reception class is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps children to learn well and achieve high standards in language skills.
- Good links with the pre-school facility on site assists a smooth start to schooling.
- Effective assessment and tracking of children's progress through regular observations guide planning, groupings and individual targets for learning.
- Intentions for learning in children's 'choosing activities' are not always defined enough to provide a clear focus for learning.
- The outdoor learning area is cramped and small.

Commentary

47. Children are helped to achieve satisfactory standards overall in the Foundation Stage through provision of a sound range of experiences that are taught satisfactorily. In addition to the main areas identified above, effective teamwork between the teaching assistants and teaching staff supports children's learning well. The leader of the Infant team regularly monitors practice, but the evaluations are not specific enough in terms of assessing the learning of this age group, or identifying exactly what works well and where practice could be improved. The sound quality of provision and children's achievement has been maintained since the last inspection during a period of change nationally in expectations for these young children's learning. The school was slow to reflect the new requirements in curriculum planning, but a framework is now in place to ensure that children receive a range of suitable experiences over the course of the year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have high expectations that encourage children to behave well.
- Strategies that encourage children to work independently for more sustained periods at each activity, and to leave their parents more confidently, require more development.

Commentary

48. Sound teaching and learning means that children's achievement is satisfactory so that many are on course to achieve the expected standard at the end of the reception year. Children are building positive relationships with adults and other children. Some children are reluctant to join the main group when their parents and carers are leaving at the start of the day and not enough attention is given to remedying this. Children show good standards of self-care, such as dressing and undressing and going to the toilet independently. This is because teachers persevere to encourage children to do such things for themselves and have developed useful prompts to remind children about what to do. Children are well behaved because all staff consistently reinforce school rules and routines and high expectations for children's conduct are made clear. Children's views are valued and they are helped to feel safe and secure in their new environment. On occasion, they are given too little time to explore different activities on a more independent basis, and are often directed by the teacher to particular activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in this area of learning so that many are on course to achieve standards that are better than those expected by the end of the reception year.
- Key skills are well taught.
- Sometimes children sit for too long in the class group so have less chance to develop learning on a more independent basis.

Commentary

49. Good teaching and learning overall helps children to make good progress. Teachers encourage children to enjoy books by considering story lines and key characters. Some effective use of resources was seen to encourage children to understand the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' and to recall it for themselves. The teacher demonstrated expressively how each character would talk, which the children used well in their own role-play. A range of books with the story was made available for the children to browse. A good focus is placed on teaching letter sounds and blends to help children to achieve well. They are encouraged to listen attentively to adults and to respond with an increased vocabulary. Many children construct coherent replies using simple phrases and sentences to talk about their experiences. More able children use simple instructions, for example, to remind others in group activities about what they are expected to do. In writing, children often form some recognisable letters when they join school. By the end of the reception year, most are using simple words in their own writing, making good attempts at writing words using their knowledge of letter sounds and show clear definition between words. More able children can construct simple sentences. Children are given good opportunities to practise writing skills in group activities, such as making books about 'The Three Little Pigs', but do not always have sufficient time to develop their ideas as too much time has been spent on whole class activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Intentions for learning are shared with children so that they are clear about what they are doing as a class.
- The teaching assistant is used well in class discussions to make observational notes of children's understanding.
- Sometimes opportunities are missed to reinforce number skills in more independent activities.

Commentary

50. Many pupils are on course to reach the expected standards in this area of learning. In work samples, children were beginning to use symbols to form and calculate simple addition sums by the end of the reception year. This shows sound achievement since their entry to the school. Satisfactory teaching helps children, for example, to recognise numbers and count accurately. Learning intentions are made clear for class discussions and learning is often reinforced in other tasks, for example discussing the shape of mats in physical activities and counting the number of spots on ladybird pictures. Some effective use of adult helpers was seen when they make notes of children's achievements during whole class activities. These are then used to track their attainment. However, in group activities led by adults, inaccuracies are not always picked up, such as number reversals. Some higher attaining children are not always challenged by these activities, for example the focus during the inspection was on number 3 when many of these children can count accurately beyond this. There is scope for activities for children to have more independence in order to engage and challenge them more effectively.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular opportunities are provided to help children understand about the world around them.
- Teachers use visitors well to bring learning alive.
- Sometimes whole class activities and more independent work are not well-balanced.

Commentary

51. By the end of the reception year, children's knowledge and understanding of the world has increased satisfactorily since they started school and is supported by sound teaching and learning. Some regular activities, such as observing the weather help children to become more aware and interested in the world around them. Specific events, such as bonfire night are used well to raise awareness of keeping safe in the environment. Discussion as a class helps children to understand how they can keep safe in other situations, such as crossing a road. However, sometimes the discussion is dominated by the teacher and opportunities are missed to ask supplementary questions to extend the children's understanding. Visitors are used effectively, such as police and health staff, which help children to learn about people in the community. Children are encouraged to record in different ways what they had found out, which acts as a useful reference point for recall later in the year. They are given independent opportunities to develop their skills in using computers, for example they use a mouse confidently and accurately to make noises by choosing different keys.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Techniques in gymnastic skills are taught well.
- Sometimes a slow pace in gym sessions means that skills are not developed as effectively as they could be.
- Less opportunity to develop skills further in the outdoor area.

Commentary

52. Satisfactory teaching and learning helps children to develop their physical skills, which match the standards expected of similar aged children, demonstrating sound achievement overall. Children show sound finer control of small equipment and tools to write, join small construction material, and cut and glue models. In a gym session, jumping skills were well taught so the children began to control and coordinate their movements with greater success. However, the slow pace of the lesson meant that they were not able to develop their skills further on large apparatus. Children sometimes found difficulty in finding spaces to move and occasionally huddled together but they walked, ran, jumped, and crawled with sound control and some imagination when moving as a train and a crab. They were inspired by the example set by the teacher, but also by other children, who were encouraged to demonstrate good practice. Children have some opportunity to develop their physical skills outdoors, using wheeled vehicles but the area is small and cramped and lacks the space for exploring movement at speed or at different levels to encourage more adventurous use of their physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some good use of resources to develop storylines.
- The role-play area is not inspiring enough to encourage imaginative play.

Commentary

53. Standards match those expected for children of this age and children are achieving satisfactorily as a result of sound teaching and learning. Some very good resources were prepared to help children to re-enact the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' and children responded well, pretending to be the different characters. However, the role-play area designed as a Seaside Café is less inspiring and did not engage or sustain the children's interest in imaginative play. Staff provide a range of opportunities for artwork in two and three dimensions, as seen in some simple but effective models of houses for the 'Three Pigs'. Children are helped to explore different media to experiment successfully with colour, shape and texture, such as some effective paintings of faces. Creativity can sometimes be stifled when unsuitable tasks are set, such as asking children to use collage materials to simply fill in templates already prepared by adults.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths

- Good opportunities for English development in other curriculum subjects.
- Pupils are reaching standards above the national averages.
- Pupils with special educational needs and who have English as an additional language are achieving well.
- Good monitoring of teaching and learning.

Commentary

54. In the national tests in 2003, standards by Year 2 were above average for reading and well above average for writing. All pupils gained at least the expected standard for seven-year-olds. This was an improvement on previous years, especially in reading where the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3 has increased substantially. Inspection findings show that pupils are reaching standards that are above average in both reading and writing. By the time pupils leave the school at age nine, they are reaching standards that are above expectations for their age, with some well above this. Overall, pupils are achieving well, given their literacy skills when they start school.

55. Pupils are confident speakers and keen to make contributions in oral sessions during lessons. They develop their vocabularies well as they progress through the school helped by the opportunities given to them and the language their teachers use. For example, pupils prepare questions to ask when on visits or before they interview the many visitors to the school. Teachers use the 'correct' terminology in lessons so that pupils learn to use it themselves. In one science lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils learned, and used the term, 'porphyry' correctly when applied to a particular mineral. Year 2 pupils, in a literacy lesson, provided many suitable verbs to describe the actions of a character in a book.

56. Pupils read well and they become confident and keen to read. They read with expression, observing punctuation and often adopting different voices to fit with different characters. Pupils have a good store of words they know, while unfamiliar ones are tackled confidently using their knowledge of phonics. The school has been successful in raising the standard of boys' reading and writing. This has been brought about by the provision of more non-fiction texts, 'boys' fiction and extending the use of posters, jokes and newspapers. The school has also encouraged parents to take an active role in helping their children at home and has provided them with useful contact booklets to share success and difficulties. Each class has a good stock of books that are well used. The library has been recently re-arranged and although it has an adequate stock of books, many of these are old and mostly suited to pupils in Years 3 and 4.

57. The standard of pupils' writing is above the national average with many pupils reaching levels beyond this. Pupils spell common words well with plausible efforts at spelling unfamiliar ones. Pupils in the younger classes are encouraged to join their letters and handwriting develops satisfactorily. Pupils convey what they mean well in a wide variety of ways including poems, posters, play scripts and short stories. They develop the skills of writing well as they move through the school so that their sentences become more complex and they make more use of punctuation. Although opportunities for pupils to write at length are limited in literacy lessons, their writing is well developed through other subjects. For example, they write about science experiments using their own language to describe their tests for permeability. In history lessons, they have written letters home as though from invaders of Ancient Britain. They have also prepared questions to ask before embarking on research into the lives of ordinary people at the time.

58. The standard of teaching is good overall with satisfactory teaching observed in Year 2. The good teaching presented ideas in a lively, animated way, engaging and motivating pupils well so that they tried hard throughout the lesson. In these lessons, teachers posed their questions well and used pupils' responses to help others learn and keep interest high. In one lesson for example, pupils' interest was immediately grabbed because they were presented with a striking poster showing the detonation of a tower block and a 'reporter' wielding a microphone about to interview a bystander. This interest was built on well in discussion and in the subsequent provision of written and oral activities. There is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets in the younger classes. While some of these provide a useful means of practising work, others restrict the responses pupils can make, and in any case are not well stored so that pupils' work is not presented to its best advantage.

59. The high levels of adult support in many lessons are making a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs or at the early stages of learning English. Teaching assistants are skilled and support teachers well, often taking responsibility for small groups during practical activities. They liaise well with teachers and take an active part in the initial oral sessions. Their focus support with small groups is helping pupils with additional needs to concentrate and lifting their achievement. This is reflected in the good progress seen in these pupils' books.

60. The leadership and management of the subject are good and have played a major part in raising standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The coordinator has monitored lessons and provided the teachers concerned with ways in which to improve their teaching. Good use has been made of teachers from the local middle school to observe lessons and the coordinator has observed lessons in that school, to the mutual benefit of both schools. The governor with responsibility for literacy has also observed lessons and liaises well with the coordinator. Strategies have been identified and successfully implemented to improve writing, especially that of boys. The coordinator supports her colleagues well providing advice and resources and herself making good use of the advice from the local authority advisory service. The school has generated good support from parents both in helping with the development of reading and writing. Each pupil, for example, is provided with a workbook that supplements the activities at school with work done at home.

English across the curriculum

61. The provision of English across the curriculum is good and there are many opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and extend their skills and understanding.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good standards achieved in Years 3 and 4.
- Results in national tests for seven year olds have improved.
- Teaching assistants support pupils well and make a good contribution to their learning.
- Too many worksheets are used in Years 1 and 2, which creates some barriers to learning.
- ICT is not used enough to support learning in mathematics lessons.
- Behaviour is not always managed effectively to ensure pupils remain attentive in lessons.

Commentary

62. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have generally improved between 1999 and 2003, keeping pace with results nationally, and they are currently above the national average. In 2003 all pupils attained at least the expected level 2 with almost a third attaining the higher than expected level 3.

63. Standards of work in the current Year 2 are about average. For example, during the inspection Year 1 pupils estimated with reasonable accuracy numbers of objects to twenty and Year 2 pupils successfully found missing numbers in regular sequences. Compared with the levels at which pupils start in Year 1, they make sound progress overall and achievement is satisfactory, reflecting the satisfactory teaching and learning seen during the inspection. Work by last year's Year 2 shows that pupils achieved some good standards in their number work, particularly in calculation. This is because teachers place a strong focus on this aspect of mathematics, which helps pupils to practise and develop their mental skills on a regular basis and apply these in number problems. In other aspects of mathematical work, achievement was broadly satisfactory. There was too little work recorded over the course of last year to show that pupils had enough depth and breadth of understanding to reach higher standards, particularly in handling data, which was very limited. Pupils' skills and independence in communicating their understanding of mathematics is limited by the time spent completing worksheets, so when they do set out their work themselves, it is not careful or methodical enough to ensure accuracy in their solutions. This was an concern in the last inspection and has not been successfully addressed in Years 1 and 2. In addition, the worksheets are not well organised and rarely annotated to show what pupils have achieved and when. This does not provide an effective form of assessment or help pupils to know what they have to do to improve.

64. Results of standardised tests conducted by the school show that pupils' standards in Year 4 are higher than those expected of most Year 4 pupils and, compared with test results in Year 2, pupils have made good progress. This is much better than standards observed during the last inspection and is due to the good features of teaching that help pupils to learn well in lessons. Standards in the current Year 4 confirm the good attainment and the good achievement that pupils make from the end of Year 2, and the good achievement in lessons. The work in Years 3 and 4 is challenging. Mental skills are well taught and applied successfully to solve problems. Opportunities for problem solving interest pupils so that they are often unwilling to stop and want to pursue their investigations further. For example, in a Year 4 class one pupil found a pattern to shape enlargement, which was to be shared with the class. Another pupil chose not to hear the answer at that point because he wanted to find it out for himself. The teacher respected the pupils' viewpoint.

65. Provision in mathematics is of a similar quality to the previous inspection. Teachers in Years 1 to 4 have a good understanding of the National Strategy for Numeracy, and lessons follow the guidelines so that learning is structured carefully through detailed plans. This has contributed towards improving standards. However, computers are rarely accessed during mathematics lessons due to limited equipment being available in classes. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well because of the good support they receive in the group activities from well-trained and experienced teaching assistants. The achievement is better when there are not too many pupils in each group so that they are able to be involved more in the learning process. Pupils with significantly higher ability in mathematics are also well supported. They have been identified and provided with additional support at a different location to extend their mathematical skills.

66. Overall, teaching is of similar sound quality to that seen at the last inspection. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils. Their support and praise for pupils' achievement in lessons motivates individuals and they usually respond by working hard. Where teaching was good, as seen in Year 4, the teacher had high expectations for behaviour and the good pace and lively interactions held the pupils' interest throughout the lesson. A factor constraining learning in some Year 1 and 2 classes is the management of pupils' behaviour. While most pupils are attentive and well behaved, a few do not listen carefully enough or answer questions by taking turns. So explanations were interspersed with behaviour reminders, which wasted time on minor concerns.

67. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and have helped to improve standards since the last inspection, especially in Years 3 and 4. Test results have been analysed carefully and more challenging targets set for pupils to promote higher achievement. A Family Numeracy class has been established which helps parents to support their children more effectively at home. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The school has identified further areas for development, with a clear improvement plan, but there is scope for this to be more sharply focused on where standards might be improved as a result of any action taken.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Mathematics is used in other areas of the curriculum but this is better in Years 3 and 4, for example to record results from science experiments in graphs and tables. In Year 3 pupils have used ICT to represent data about lengths of shadows, and in Year 4 to display their work on temperature. As yet the use and development of pupils' mathematics skills in other subjects is not planned systematically enough for this to make a strong contribution to raising the achievement.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and more able pupils reach higher standards than seen at the last inspection.
- The curriculum is well organised with a strong focus on pupils investigating scientifically.
- Teachers plan well for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills in science.
- There is good emphasis on pupils developing scientific language and raising questions to investigate.
- ICT is used to support science but planning for this is not sufficiently well co-ordinated.

Commentary

69. There is a wealth of evidence from pupils' recorded work in all year groups that they are achieving well in science. This was confirmed in discussion with Year 4 pupils who confidently explained recent investigations on rocks and talked readily about work they had done in Year 3. Teacher assessment, for national assessments in 2003, showed that all Year 2 pupils gained at least the expected standard for their age and well over a quarter achieved the more advanced level. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection when able pupils were not achieving well enough. Pupils in Year 4 achieve better standards than usually seen for their age and the depth and quality of the work from the most able is similar to that usually seen for eleven-year-olds. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are achieving well too.

70. Overall, science teaching is good and enables pupils to be successful learners, gaining knowledge well and also developing good investigative skills. In the lessons observed teaching was mainly good. All the lessons started new topics and teachers used lively ways to introduce these, for instance by simulating 'toothache' to get pupils talking about their teeth. Year 1 pupils eagerly explored some imaginatively organised 'dark environments' to search for items. By the end of the lesson they were starting to make the link between light and the ability to see objects. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for science. Teachers are very thorough in introducing them to new scientific terms and ideas, and ensure that pupils learn their science by carrying out investigations to develop skills of prediction, fair testing and analysis of results. Where teaching was satisfactory, a few pupils found it difficult to behave sensibly, this disrupted the lesson's flow and the school's behaviour strategy was not used readily to remedy this. A very good feature in Years 3 and 4 particularly is the encouragement for pupils to think creatively and raise their own scientific questions at the start of investigations. Year 4 pupils, beginning their investigations on temperature, were challenged to work out what different types of thermometers could be used for and also to think of reasons why the staff-room temperature might alter.

71. Pupils' recorded work is of good quality overall. It is very good in Years 3 and 4 for more able pupils who are writing in depth about investigations, devising charts and graphs and drawing thoughtful conclusions. Teachers' marking gives pupils useful feedback as it is thorough, gives praise, asks questions and identifies improvement points.

72. The subject leader has worked hard and successfully to support colleagues in improving science attainment for more able pupils. The subject is well organised and pupils' work is moderated and assessed carefully. Numerous visits and visitors, such as trips to wildlife centres and participating in science plays, support pupils' learning in science. Pupils get the opportunity to use ICT in science to make charts and graphs, and research on the internet but this is not identified systematically enough in the curriculum plans.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main weakness

- Gaps in equipment to further develop pupils' skills and support their learning in other subjects.

Commentary

73. By Year 2, pupils are reaching standards that are in line with those expected of pupils of this age. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily, even though they have quite limited opportunities to learn and practise their skills.

74. Year 2 pupils capably use a variety of software including paint and mathematics programs to assist in their learning. They employ ICT to create simple sentences and experiment with different fonts, print sizes and colours. They have programmed a floor robot to trace out a prescribed path and used adventure games to help them consider alternatives. Many pupils open programs and with help store or retrieve their work, though some pupils require assistance to do so. The school has also provided suitable opportunities for pupils to operate the overhead projector and use the photocopying machine.

75. By the time pupils leave school at age nine they have built satisfactorily on their earlier experiences and are reaching the standards expected of pupils this age. They have learned more about word processing and so can cut and paste, add graphics and rearrange text. Pupils input data to produce graphs, with more able pupils choosing from the options available to decide which gives the clearest result. For example, pupils have produced graphs of eye colour and the different temperatures around the school. Pupils are beginning to understand the benefits of using ICT to develop ideas and solve problems. Those in the older classes for example, produced simple presentations for children in the reception class. In addition they produced party invitations incorporating text and graphics in a way appropriate for young children. Pupils make satisfactory use of CD-ROMs and the Internet to gather information, for example on Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. They have though, little experience of sending and receiving e-mails by Internet.

76. The teaching of ICT skills was observed in two lessons, which involved small groups of pupils, but these observations were not sufficient to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching in the subject. In both sessions the teaching was good because the groups concerned made good progress. Teachers demonstrated the skills involved using a computer while pupils watched before trying for themselves. Teachers or a teaching assistant on an individual basis then gave support, demonstrating good knowledge of the functions being used. For example, in one lesson pupils animated their words using a graphics program. Teachers quickly moved them on to more functions of the program once the initial objectives had been learned so that pupils made good progress. Pupils were well motivated and sustained their interest throughout the lessons and were keen to show and share their finished work. Pupils in Year 2 for example produced some imaginative pictures of a firework scene. Although their early efforts answered the task adequately they persevered well to improve their ideas.

77. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory as pupils are making the required progress and reaching appropriate standards. Most teachers have received training and presently all teaching assistants are undergoing similar training that will enable them to undertake greater responsibility. Recent improvements have been made to the computer suite with new

machines and the school has its own website. However, several obsolete computers were removed from use in September and, currently, the shortfall is being made up by pupils using teachers' laptops in class to support their learning. Teachers have to make as good use as they can of the computer suite since space and equipment prevent a whole class from using it. With very limited access to computers in classes or in shared areas most work has to take place in the computer suite. There is inconsistency in its use, for example, in some instances pupils are assigned there on the basis of finishing other work or as a reward. The availability of teaching assistants is also a key factor in whether teachers are able to use the suite fully and successfully. It is well used however at lunchtimes and in the after school club which is well attended. The headteacher recognises that the ratio of computers to pupils is the bare minimum for current national guidelines, and well below the new guidelines for the next academic year. More replacement machines are to be purchased shortly.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. The provision of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. For example pupils make use of software in music and art to add to their knowledge and use CD-ROMs as a means of research in history and geography.

HUMANITIES

In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography, with just one lesson seen which was in history. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. There is every indication from pupils' work that standards are at least broadly average in Years 2, 3 and 4.

In both history and geography it is clear that a very good range of visits to museums, the locality and a residential trip to a different part of the country play an important part in making learning interesting and relevant. In the very well taught history lesson observed, pupils recalled readily what they had seen on a visit to an Anglo-Saxon site reconstruction at West Stow. The lesson made very good links between history and geography. Pupils became engrossed in using local maps to find different place names with Anglo Saxon origins and didn't want to finish the activity. Pupils in Year 4 spoke thoughtfully about their current local history topic, identifying the differences between Newmarket a hundred years ago and the present day. The subjects are well organised and the plans in both provide sound coverage of the National Curriculum. Pupils' work is sampled, activities are photographed and end of year assessments are made, providing a satisfactory record of pupils' experiences and progress through the school.

All Saints is a Church of England voluntary aided school so religious education has been inspected separately and is the subject of a different report, which is available from the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were observed in **music** to draw firm conclusions about overall provision or pupils' attainment and achievement. In a whole school assembly, pupils sang with gusto and overall produced a reasonably tuneful exposition to a piano accompaniment. Visitors to the assembly from a senior school also helped pupils to understand about different types of songs around the world with their rendition of African songs. The teacher in charge showed instruments from that continent and pupils thoroughly enjoyed guessing how they could be played. A small number of pupils were able to make good attempts to make sounds with them. The subject has enthusiastic, specialist leadership and contributions from monitoring including getting older pupils views on their music lessons, has informed the implementation of a new curriculum plan. This aims for more creative approaches to music, focusing on pupils' performance. The subject is enriched outside lessons by recorder clubs and a popular rhythm club for the youngest pupils.

Art & Design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main Strengths

- Good opportunities to develop skills and understanding in after school clubs.
- Pupils are reaching standards above that expected of pupils of this age and for many nine- year- olds standards are well above expectations.

Commentary

79. Year 2 pupils reach standards that exceed those expected nationally. They use a variety of materials, media and applicators in order to communicate their ideas and take great care with their work to produce very well observed drawings, pictures and collages. Pupils mix their own paint and have a good eye for the subtle changes possible, for example in portraying the many different shades of leaves in autumn. They compare different artists and their styles, for example those of Constable and Hokusai and have used the work of Goldsworthy as a stimulus to create seed and leaf patterns. Pupils also consider and discuss ways of improving their own, and others' work.

80. By the time pupils leave the school they have built well on their earlier work so that many are reaching standards well above those expected of pupils this age. Many of the displayed entries in local painting competitions show advanced skills and knowledge and the school's success in these competitions is testament to these levels of skill. Pupils extend their observational skills well using shading and sketching techniques to accurately portray faces, rural scenes and details of flowers and leaves. They have learned techniques to convey movement and action in their pictures, for example of racehorses and jockeys. Pupils are familiar with weaving, tie dying, and the achievement of different designs using a variety of applicators such as sponges, string and fingers.

81. In the art lessons seen, teaching was good, and the quality of pupils' work confirms that teaching of the subject is consistently good across the school. In Year 2, pupils were shown ways in which to achieve the effect of straight lines on a building, using card to apply paint. Others experimented with crayons and a colour wash to illustrate covers for work in their history studies while others used computers to make firework pictures. All pupils were excited at the prospect of the work and were motivated well so that their interest and concentration were sustained throughout the lesson. The expertise of their teacher and teaching assistants meant pupils received good, one to one support and they made good progress. Pupils displayed considerable concentration and effort especially when experiencing the difficulties of card printing or the intricacy of their borders.

82. The leadership and management of the subject are good and strengths noted at the last inspection have been maintained as pupils continue to reach good standards. Teachers are given good support and ideas from the coordinator and pupils and teachers benefit from the expertise of other members of staff. Art is used well to enhance work in other areas of the curriculum. The school makes good use of local artists to teach pupils further skills. Pupils are provided with more opportunities through the two after school clubs, which are well attended. The school has achieved the coveted Arts mark award and is very hopeful of receiving a further one this year at the higher 'silver' level. Resources for art and design are very good and scheme of work ensures good coverage of all strands of the subject.

Design & Technology

Provision for design and technology is **good**.

Main Strengths

- Above average standards of pupils' work.
- Good planning incorporating other areas of the curriculum.
- Quality of support material for teachers.

Commentary

83. By Year 2 pupils are reaching standards above those expected of pupils this age. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills in designing and making a wide variety of models and constructions. For example, they produce simple designs for making houses using different materials and methods. They use techniques such as tearing, folding and cutting card to fit their designs and combine and attach materials in various ways. For instance, pupils in Year 2 made sack barrows designed to carry corn using wood, card and axles.

84. By the time pupils leave the school their knowledge and skills have developed very well and they are exceeding standards usually seen for nine-year-olds, with many achieving higher than this. Pupils plan the different stages of making a design, listing what is needed and the methods to be used. They evaluate how well the final products fitted the purpose and how they could be improved next time. Design and technology are used well in most areas of the curriculum so that pupils benefit from many opportunities to develop their skills. For example, they produced a huge book as part of their literacy studies with each page showing characters and scenes animated in several ways through the actions of levers and pivots. This book occupied a large part of the school hall before reaching a wider audience in the entrance to County Hall. Pupils have designed sausages and had them made professionally, and made and modelled their own T shirts in aid of Oxfam. They have completely organised parties for Foundation Stage children from invitations to setting menus and providing food. Older pupils have produced spinning models with some requiring two electrical circuits. They analyse and evaluate commercially produced pizzas and cakes before producing their own.

85. In the one design and technology lesson observed the standard of teaching was very good. The standards pupils are reaching suggest that teaching is good throughout the school. In this lesson the activities were very well planned and made high demands on pupils' abilities to work independently. Tasks were explained very carefully and pupils assigned to work in pairs as means of devising ways to design a survey to find out what people would like as toppings for a pizza. By the end of the lesson pupils had independently devised ways to accomplish this successfully and avoided all the pitfalls a less considered method might have encountered.

86. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The coordinator is keen and enthusiastic and gives excellent support to her colleagues. This includes providing plans and ideas for numerous projects, and design and making opportunities. Teaching and learning have been monitored and advice and ways to improve given. Resources are very good and the subject enjoys a high profile in the school.

Physical Education

Provision in this subject is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Gymnastics and games skills are taught well.
- A very good range of opportunities provided to develop physical skills outside of lessons.
- Good involvement of specialist teachers to work with pupils and develop their physical skills.
- Behaviour is not always monitored and managed well enough.

Commentary

87. It was only possible to observe lessons in the gymnastics, games and swimming elements of the subject during the inspection. However, planning shows that all elements of the physical education curriculum are carefully planned over the course of each year to ensure that pupils receive a good range of experiences. The school has improved on the sound standards observed at the last inspection, through better quality of teaching that is almost all good so that pupils achieve well in developing their physical skills. Effective use is made of specialist staff to teach particular skills. For example, Year 3 pupils benefit from a specialist coach to teach them specific techniques in handling, passing and intercepting rugby balls. Pupils in Year 4 receive specialist instruction from a swimming

coach who helps them to effectively increase their confidence in the water as well as develop such techniques as breathing and moving.

88. In all lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. They provide good models for the pupils to follow, and also use demonstrations by pupils very effectively so that others can gain a clear understanding of what they are able to achieve. For example, in a gym lesson in Year 2, pupils were shown how to balance and what happens when there is imbalance. This helped them to pay greater attention to controlling their movements when balancing on two parts of their body and then one. In a games session, demonstration increased pupils' efforts to be more adventurous, for example in widening the distance between players when passing and intercepting balls. Teachers are effective in teaching specific techniques to help pupils to throw, catch and dribble balls and beanbags with good accuracy and control. For example, in Year 3, pupils use shoulder passes to throw to each other and keep close contact with the ball to move it with their feet only. In Year 1, the group with the teacher successfully developed their skills in aiming and throwing beanbags at a target, but the physical skills of a group under other supervision were not developed so successfully. Better monitoring of the two groups was required to ensure time was used productively.

89. In the well-taught lessons, pupils of all abilities participated enthusiastically, worked hard and achieved well in terms of controlling and coordinating their movements. For example, in Year 2, pupils tried hard to extend their body movements and to produce some effective shapes. They responded well to the teacher's high expectations for effort and persistence in extending their skills on the large apparatus to produce imaginative and dramatic shapes.

90. There is a very good range of planned extra-curricular activities to develop pupils' interests in physical activities outside of lessons. The school also takes part in competitions with other local schools, such as athletics and rounders, and meets with some success in sports.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision is **good**.

Main strength

- A well-structured curriculum with a good range of activities to raise pupils' awareness of personal, social and health issues.

Commentary

91. Just one lesson was seen in this aspect. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. A new and very thorough programme for personal, social and health education has been put in place during the past year and includes work on diet, health, drug education and aspects of personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy life style, gain confidence and interact with others. It is well supported by visits from outside agencies. In the well-taught lesson that was observed, pupils collaborated sensibly in small groups to make decisions about the difficulty of achieving a variety of goals. Several responses showed some deep thinking and good understanding on how to go about achieving personal goals. Work sampled from Years 3 and 4 show pupils are experiencing a good range of activities that encourage them to reflect on friendship, responsibilities, rules and personal opinions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).