

INSPECTION REPORT

ELMSETT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124695

Headteacher: Mr P Marshall

Lead inspector: Marianne Harris

Dates of inspection: 5th – 7th July 2004

Inspection number: 256058

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 5-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 59

School address: The Street
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Suffolk
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Telephone number: 01473 658303
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr A Seaborne

Date of previous inspection: 29th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Elmsett Church of England Primary is a small village school that serves the local community and surrounding villages. A significant number of pupils come from the new army and air force base nearby. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average, and the proportion who have special educational needs is above average. These needs vary, but are mainly for moderate learning difficulties. Overall the pupils come from average social circumstances and from homes where English is the main language spoken. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. When they join the school their knowledge and skills are about average. In recent years the school has won many awards. In 2002 they received a Healthy Schools Award, a School Achievement Award and an ECO Award. In 2003 they received another School Achievement Award for their results in national tests.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23288	Marianne Harris	Lead inspector	Foundation stage; special educational needs; English; geography; history; religious education
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30244	Roger Tapley	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology ; art and design; design technology; music; physical education; citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Elmsett is an excellent school at the heart of the local community. Standards are well above average and all pupils achieve very well. Teaching and learning are very good and pupils are very enthusiastic about school. Leadership and management are very good, with all of the staff and governors working as a very effective team. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- All pupils achieve very well because lessons are very well planned to meet their needs
- The expertise of each teacher is used very effectively to provide a very good education for all pupils
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent and behaviour is exemplary. This contributes to pupils' very good achievement
- The school is very well led and managed, with the headteacher providing excellent leadership
- The curriculum is very good with great opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons
- Pupils are given very good support and advice because teachers know individual children very well
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school and support their children's learning very well
- There is an over-dependence on printed worksheets and this results in younger pupils having too few opportunities to record for themselves in science

There has been very good improvement since the time of the last inspection in 1998.

Standards have risen and remained well above average because the quality of teaching has improved. All of the issues identified have been tackled very effectively and the considerable strengths in pupils' attitudes and in the leadership and management of the school have been maintained successfully.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A*
science	A	A*	A	A*

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school, as well as how they do in lessons. **Pupils' overall achievement is very good.** When they join the Reception class children have skills and knowledge that are average, and they make very good progress throughout their time in school. By the time children enter Year 1 most of them have reached the expected goals for children's learning, and many have exceeded them. By the end of Year 2, standards in national tests are above average overall, and standards in work seen are above average. However, standards in science at the end of Year 2 are lower than those in English and mathematics because there are too many worksheets used and pupils do not have enough opportunities to record for themselves. By the end of Year 6 standards in national tests and in work seen are well above average. Although caution must be exercised when comparing test results with other schools because the number of pupils taking tests in Years 2 and 6 are small, it is a notable fact that test results have been consistently high over the last few years. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so that they can make very good progress, and pupils who are of higher ability also make very good progress. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, standards

are also well above average with some very high standards seen in the art work displayed around the school.

Pupils' personal qualities are excellent. **The school makes excellent provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.** Pupils are confident and mature and have a very good understanding about other cultures. Relationships throughout the school are excellent, behaviour is exemplary, and pupils are very keen to learn. Attendance is well above average and pupils make every effort to arrive on time for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good.

Teaching and learning are very good, with the best possible use being made of each individual teacher's expertise and knowledge. Assessment is very good because teachers know the pupils very well and give them very good guidance on how to improve their work. There are, however, some occasions when there is too much reliance on printed worksheets and this results in too few opportunities for younger pupils to record for themselves in science. The curriculum is very broad and encompasses many opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons. The very effective work that is carried out with neighbouring small schools means the pupils are very well prepared to move on to secondary school. Very good care is taken of all of the pupils. The school is at the heart of the community and this is of significant benefit to the pupils as the expertise and knowledge of local people are harnessed effectively to make school life interesting for the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and continually strives to provide the very best for all of the pupils. The staff, including teaching assistants, work very well together and take collective responsibility for improvements within the school. The governors do a very good job and are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. All have worked very hard to make the new building work happen, which will further improve the education for the pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is at the heart of the community and parents are very happy with the education that their children receive. Many parents travel a long way so that their children can attend. They know that the school is doing a very good job and that their children are very happy in school. Pupils have similar positive views. They feel that they play a large part in the running of the school and that their views are listened to and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is

- Reduce the number of printed worksheets used

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

By the end of Year 6 pupils reach standards in national test that are well above average. This is reflected in work throughout the school, where very good teaching and learning results in high standards overall and very good achievement for all pupils.

Main strengths

- All pupils, whatever their ability, achieve very well
- Children in the Reception year have a very good start
- Standards have been consistently high over the last few years

Commentary

1. The number of pupils in each year group is very small and so extreme caution is required when making judgements on standards year on year and in comparing Elmsett with other schools. This is because the performance of just one child can skew the overall results and have a disproportionate affect on the performance of the school. There is little value in analysing trends over time because the numbers are so small and are statistically meaningless. However, having said that, the results for all pupils in national tests over the last few years has been consistently high and this represents very good achievement overall.
2. When children enter the school they have average skills and knowledge. They make a very good start in their Reception year and, by the time they enter Year 1 most of the children are likely to reach the expected goals for learning, and many are likely to exceed them, especially in their personal development and in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. This represents very good achievement as they settle quickly into school and become familiar with the routines. They are ready to learn and keen to do so.
3. By the end of Year 2, results in the 2003 national tests were average in reading and writing, but above average in mathematics. In work seen, standards are above average overall, with all pupils achieving very well, because standards are similar in all subjects. This is because the curriculum is very broad and relevant to all pupils, therefore they achieve well in all subjects, and very well overall. The exception to this is in science, where too many worksheets result in pupils not having enough opportunity to record for themselves.
4. By the end of Year 6, results in the 2003 national tests were well above average. Throughout their time in school pupils make very good progress overall and this is reflected in the test results. Pupils achieve very well in all subjects as work seen during the inspection was above average overall. This is because the headteacher has ensured that the pupils have the best quality teaching available and that the expertise of individual teachers is shared throughout the school.
5. Pupils with special educational needs, or those of higher ability, all achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and most achieve the nationally expected level in each subject. This is due to the very good assessment procedures that teachers use to monitor and track each pupil and ensures that they make the progress expected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.8 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.6 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)

mathematics	17.0 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)
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There were 5 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (29.7)	26.8 (27.1)
mathematics	29.4 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.2 (31.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Excellent behaviour and attitudes are achieved through an inspiring school ethos to which all staff, pupils and parents make a significant contribution. Spiritual, moral social and cultural development are excellent. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Main strengths

- Excellent attitudes, exemplary behaviour and very good relationships all make a significant positive contribution pupils' very good achievement
- Attendance and punctuality are very good
- Excellent opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Excellent awareness of the environment through the recycling initiative

Commentary

6. This is a very happy school with an inspiring ethos, which is reflected in pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour. Very good attendance is achieved through effective monitoring and the excellent support of parents. All pupils are keen to come into school punctually and start to participate in the numerous activities provided. Some pupils raise the flag to indicate that the school is a recycling centre, others help set out activities before the start of the school day. Parents are welcome in classes and talk informally to teachers and other staff, all of this contributes to a purposeful, convivial atmosphere.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/03 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

7. From the youngest children in the Foundation Stage to Year 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, feel secure in this small school and their confidence blossoms in the supportive and caring atmosphere. Children in the early years are well on course to achieve the goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the foundation stage, and most children are likely to exceed them. This positive start enables pupils to develop very good speaking and listening skills and they put these into practice by taking the initiative in suggesting ideas for the school councils.
8. Attitudes and behaviour in and around school are excellent. Pupils enjoy their lessons and cooperate well and this enables teachers to be adventurous with resources. This was illustrated in an assembly when the hand puppet, 'Bertie' was used to excellent effect. Pupils were transfixed at his antics and sat very still and silently so as not to scare him. In lessons pupils enjoy talking about the work they have been doing, they are proud of their achievements and listen carefully to the teacher. Older pupils take responsibility on many occasions. At lunchtimes they are responsible for a table of

younger pupils. The excellent behaviour reflects the high expectations of the school. Relationships between pupils and with adults in the school are very good resulting in a harmonious atmosphere where any concerns are sensitively managed.

9. Pupils are provided with excellent opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. This area has been carefully examined by the school to ensure that a rich and varied cultural and spiritual experience is offered to pupils by the use of visiting specialists and days with the cluster schools. For example the day spent exploring aspects of Angola and writing a booklet had a very positive impact on discovering about life in other countries. This resulted in the pupils illustrating a book, which has since been published, that shows great empathy and understanding of life in a different country.
10. The school provides pupils with an excellent understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community via its commitment to recycling. Pupils are encouraged to think carefully about the consequences of their actions and put these ideas into practice using the on site recycling facility. For example, at lunchtime apple cores and other fruit waste is transferred to a green bin and then to a composter. Parents and businesses are also fully involved; the recycling of ink cartridges has proved to be a valuable income source. Respect for the planet and its finite resources permeate all aspects of school life, pupils learn the eco prayer, run the eco council and learn that their contribution has an effect not only on the local community but also the world.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good and assessment helps pupils improve their work very effectively. The curriculum is very good with ample opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons. Pupils are very well cared for and the impressive links with parents and the local community contribute significantly to pupils' achievement.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are very good and result in pupils achieving very well. Pupils know how to improve their work and are very interested in learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The best possible use is made of the individual expertise of each teacher
- Teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning
- Pupils are very keen to learn and work very well together
- Assessment is very good and helps pupils improve their work successfully
- There are too many worksheets used, especially in science

Commentary

11. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. Most of the teachers take turns to teach in each class and this results in a very supportive and friendly school where all pupils are well known by all staff. Work is very well planned so that it meets the needs of all pupils, whatever their ability. Every teacher in the school has a particular expertise and the headteacher has made sure that this expertise is used to the maximum. This has led to all pupils benefiting from the available skills and knowledge, and in turn has resulted in very good achievement for all. So, for example the music and physical education specialists teach across the school and make sure that the necessary skills and knowledge are taught very effectively to all pupils.
12. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to all pupils, but especially to those who have special educational needs. They know the pupils well and can support them very effectively, helping them to have full access to all lessons, and encouraging them to work very hard and do their best. Pupils' progress is tracked very effectively with targets being set for each child, and this helps them to know how to improve and reach higher standards.
13. The assessment system overall is very good. Careful notes are kept on each child and progress is monitored to make sure all are doing as well as they are able. This, coupled with the fact that all of the pupils are very well known to all staff, means that all pupils are supported very well. Work is well marked so that teachers encourage the pupils and also tell them where improvements could be made. These comments, and discussions during lessons, demonstrate that teachers have very high

expectations and are very keen for the pupils to do well. For example, during a mental mathematics session in Years 5 and 6, the teacher thought that he would challenge the class and carried out most of the session in French. The pupils were very excited and worked very hard to answer mental mathematics problems using French to answer.

14. All pupils are very keen to learn because lessons are interesting and varied. The afternoon spent exploring African dance is a very good example of how involved the pupils are in their own learning. They enjoy planning how they are going to work and then working together to finish a task. They are very supportive of each other and want everyone to succeed.
15. The relative weakness in the very positive picture of teaching is the dependence on printed worksheets in some lessons. This is especially true in science when younger children do not have enough opportunity to record for themselves. The school is very aware of this issue and is taking steps to address it.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	7	7	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very imaginatively planned, of very good quality with some excellent features, and covers all National Curriculum requirements. It enables all pupils to achieve very well throughout the school. A very good range of extra curricular activities, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. Resources are good and accommodation is satisfactory.

Main strengths

- The planning of the curriculum is very good and monitored effectively
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The school constantly looks for ways to improve the curriculum
- There is very good provision for personal and social education
- A very wide range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum
- Staff make the best use of limited accommodation

Commentary

16. The curriculum is very well planned to ensure that all pupils are given a curriculum that meets their needs and covers the National Curriculum requirements very effectively. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Better arrangements are made for the teaching of geography and information and communication technology. The total amount of teaching time for junior pupils has been raised to meet the national recommendations and planning in English and maths now caters more fully for higher achieving pupils.
17. The planning for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their difficulties are identified early in their school life and teachers produce very detailed, high quality individual education plans to support learning and to ensure that pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum and take a full part in all school activities. This is why pupils with special educational needs make such very good progress.
18. The curriculum has many strengths. Strong links are made between and within subjects. Pupils benefit from a very good range of arts and scientific subjects, including the practical. For example, there is very good support for creativity through art, dance, literacy and music, because of the involvement of visiting artists, authors, dancers and musicians. Use of information and communication technology is interwoven into the curriculum so that pupils' skills are developed well when working in other subjects. The curriculum is enhanced by such innovative schemes as working very closely with other small schools to share the expertise of specialist staff. As a result pupils have access to a larger number of teachers than they would

in a larger school. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made headdresses in their design and technology lessons based on the theme of 'Gawain and the green knight'. These were worn in drama productions with other local schools. The curriculum is being constantly evaluated and refined. Issues raised by monitoring are fed into the school improvement plan and are linked with performance management targets for individual teachers. This ensures that innovation is very well supported, and curriculum development is very good. French is now regularly taught to pupils in Years 2 to 6.

19. Personal, social and health education is very good. Pupils are encouraged to be independent, trustworthy and take responsibility by being closely involved in establishing class rules. Both the school and eco councils provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as having a say in caring for their school and the local environment. In their discussions pupils show confidence maturity and sensitivity to the needs of others. The school nurse provides good lessons on sex education and police representatives give valuable advice on the dangers of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. Good communications with parents ensure they are well prepared to support their children in these matters at home. The residential visits for Year 5 and 6 pupils gives them very good opportunities to develop independence and teamwork.
20. There is very good support for learning outside lessons. The school provides a very good range of extra curricular clubs and activities to cater for all tastes. Clubs, such as football, tennis, athletics, art, knitting and gardening are very well attended. Creative arts events where pupils perform dance and music based upon stories they have written for the 'Angola Project', serve to enrich the curriculum. There are far more opportunities than normally seen in larger schools.
21. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. Teachers make the best use of the accommodation that is barely adequate. Classroom displays exhibiting pupils' work are bright and colourful and provide a stimulating learning environment. Resources are good overall. Staff use every opportunity to acquire free equipment very well, as in the case of receiving sponsorship to increase computer software. Storage is a problem particularly for physical education where resources have to be stored in the village hall as there is no room in the school. There is no wall climbing apparatus for pupils to use during the lessons as these are held in the village hall and therefore opportunities are lost to teach climbing and rope skills. The current building programme is planned to overcome some of these issues.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives a very high priority to pupils well being. Pupils are looked after very well. They receive very good support and guidance within a caring community where their views are sought and genuinely valued.

Main strengths

- The school provides very good support and guidance and excellent induction arrangements
- There are very good arrangements to deal with child protection
- Strong teamwork enables the staff to track each child's progress carefully and involve pupils
- The school is makes excellent efforts to seek pupils' views

Commentary

22. The school provides for pupils' care, guidance and support very well. The ethos of care within an extended family is very evident. The school works very hard to build trusting relationships. Children from the local pre-school spend a few days each week in the school and get to know the staff really well. This makes it easy for them to settle into school quickly and feel part of school life. Pupils know and trust all adults in the school and this leads to relationships being excellent.

23. Child protection is taken seriously and all staff in the cluster of local schools that Elmsett belongs to have been on child protection training. Issues are dealt with promptly and efficiently. All staff are vigilant and work effectively within the locally agreed procedures. There are very good links with the outside agencies. Medical arrangements and procedures for dealing with accidents are also fully in place and training for staff has again been with cluster schools. Health and safety is viewed as a priority and the staff and governors are conscientious in minimising hazards both within and beyond the school.
24. The schools' personal and academic assessment is very effective in providing well targeted support for each pupil. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are involved in setting learning targets and they receive very good advice on how they can improve. The small size of the school ensures that all staff are fully aware of each pupil's abilities. The school acknowledges pupils' achievements both academic and personal at various times of the year including special assemblies.
25. The school is impressive in the way that it ensures that the views of pupils are taken into account, regardless of religion, racial origin and linguistic background. Pupils' views of the school are extremely positive and they are all satisfied that their ideas are listened to and acted upon. For example pupils on the eco council got involved in discussing the design of the new buildings and all pupils are involved in setting behaviour guidelines.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Excellent links exist with parents, enabling a strong sense of partnership between school and home to flourish. The links with other schools are excellent as the school maximises the benefit of working within a group of cluster schools. Outstanding links with the community and a range of specialist teachers enhance the curriculum.

Main strengths

- Parents' views of the schools are outstanding
- Parents feel very welcome in school
- Communication from school to home is excellent
- Many parents come into school and help
- There are excellent links with the local community, other schools and early years providers, and these make a significant contribution to pupils' achievements

Commentary

26. Elmsett is a small village school which is the focus of the community. It actively builds on these strength to create an excellent partnership with parents. Parents' views of the school are outstandingly supportive; they feel welcomed and are valued as partners in their children's education.
27. Parents state that the school is very approachable. There are excellent opportunities for parents to speak to staff informally as staff, including the head teacher, are available for discussions at the beginning and end of each day. This contributes to the very supportive and friendly atmosphere. Parents state that their children really enjoy school and fully participate in the huge range of activities on offer.
28. Parents receive regular newsletters about school life. There are excellent curriculum evenings that give parents a clear indication of how to help their children. One recent evening that was very positively received was on how to help your child with mathematics. The school is fortunate in having many parents come into school and help and this further contributes to the excellent links that have such a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Reports are detailed and parents feel that they know exactly how their children are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Pupils are also very aware of what their targets are and how they can improve their work.
29. Excellent home school communication keeps parents well informed about their child's progress. Reports are once a term and therefore parents can comprehensively track targets and respond to how their child is doing. Regular parents' evenings also make a valuable contribution. Reading diaries and homework diaries are also excellently used. Targets for pupils with special needs are very well recorded and checked appropriately at the reviews. Parents demonstrate their commitment

to the school by the support of the Parent Teachers Association that raises money for school projects, the latest of these has been contribution towards the school building fund.

30. The school is outward looking and has excellent links with the local community. Parents are frequently used as a resource for learning, any specific skills are utilised for the benefit of all pupils. For example, a lively writing project, was a huge success because an author worked with groups of pupils, sharing the skills and knowledge necessary to write successfully. The huge range of visits and visitors into school gives excellent opportunities for developing the curriculum. The pupils and staff have the chance to work with others in the cluster of small schools partnership and this is highly effective in giving pupils experience of wider communities as well as providing exciting additions to the curriculum.
31. There are excellent links with the playgroup, other cluster schools and the local secondary school. This results in the smooth transfer from primary to secondary schools and pupils who are keen to move on to the next stage of their education. Information about pupils transferring is shared so that pupils have every chance of settling in quickly and being successful in their new school. The school is highly effective in ensuring that those with special educational needs are reassured about the changes and challenges presented by a new school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed with excellent leadership by the headteacher. The governors do a very good job and fulfil their statutory duties very well. All staff work very effectively together to provide a very good education for the pupils.

Main strengths

- The headteacher is an excellent leader
- Strong teamwork across the school has a very clear focus on ensuring the best possible provision to the pupils
- The very supportive governors are prepared to act as critical friends, and who have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development

Commentary

32. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He has excellent vision. He is very clear about the strategic direction of the school. This is shared very effectively with all who work within it and, as a result, there is very strong teamwork and consistency that derives from shared values. This has resulted in the pupils doing very well and the school receiving achievement awards in 2002 and 2003 together with a healthy school award in 2002. The headteacher's aim is to empower staff so as to provide stimulating learning opportunities for all pupils. As a result the school has received an eco award and has an active eco council and recycling centre that both raises money for the school and encourages pupils to look after the environment. There has been a conscious policy to make the best use of the expertise of all members of staff so that all pupils can achieve very well. For example, art and music specialist teach part time in the school so that all pupils can experience high quality teaching from specialists.
33. All adults working in the school are providing the best possible context for pupils to achieve very well. Pupils lie at the heart of what the school is about and the headteacher sees his role very much in terms of representing the pupils' best interests, and ensuring that they get the best from the school. He sets high but demanding professional standards. There is an ongoing commitment to improvement reflected in the evaluation and school improvement cycle. The headteacher works hard to develop leadership and management skills in others. As this is a small school all staff have to apply these skills in managing the curriculum. The very good leadership skills of his staff support the headteacher.

34. Governance of the school is very good. Governors are very supportive of the school and bring to it a range of personal and professional expertise. There is a good flow of information between the headteacher and the governors, both formally and informally. The governing body expect the headteacher to provide full reports for it's formal meetings. There is a very good relationship with the headteacher but governors are prepared to question and provide the necessary degree of challenge, in their capacity of critical friend, to ensure that decisions are tested and thought through. This has resulted recently in the appointment of extra staff that has had a positive impact on teaching and learning. They also keep in touch with the workings of the school through their visiting programme, which is linked, to the school improvement plan priorities. The result is they have a very good knowledge of the strengths of the school and aspects requiring further development. The governing body clearly makes a significant contribution to the leadership of the school through its strategic planning. They have recently created a scheme of inviting prospective governors into their meetings as observers. They support the school as volunteers. When places on the governing body become available they will have experienced colleagues to take up positions of responsibility quickly and efficiently. There is a strong sense of partnership with the school through various links the governors have made, but there is also a clear sense of accountability through their management of performance management procedures.
35. The school is very well managed. The well-established culture of self-evaluation ensures that all aspects of the school's work are improved. Rigorous monitoring of each individual pupil's performance in the national tests identifies weaknesses in the teaching and learning and these are quickly rectified. A strong sense of shared purpose among the staff is well promoted by the headteacher in the application of performance management procedures for teachers. Clear objectives are set annually and closely linked to the school improvement plan. All of these aspects make a very good contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
36. The school has very good systems for the appointment and retention of staff. The headteacher and governing body ensure that vacancies are filled by staff of high quality who are committed to the school's ethos and high expectations. Once appointed the very good induction procedures ensure that staff settle quickly and soon learn how things work. They are supported very well in their professional development. This helps to explain why this is such a happy school.
37. The school's finances are very well managed. The budgetary process is very well related to agreed objectives set within the school improvement plan. The headteacher and governing body apply the principles of best value very well. They compare the school's performance with similar schools and this helps them set challenging targets. They are adept at bidding for extra funding so as to support school initiatives like using 'the small school's fund' for information and communication technology support. Prudent housekeeping, such as making temporary appointments to cover fluctuating pupil numbers, ensures that the school is very effectively run.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	18,0105
Total expenditure	19,6473
Expenditure per pupil	3,330

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	30,176
Balance carried forward to the next	13,808

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There are very few children in the Reception year in the school. So, while personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are reported separately, the other three areas of learning are reported together as there was limited opportunity to collect enough information on these areas.

When they come into school most of the children have some pre-school experience, usually the one that is attached to the school. This means that children settle quickly and are very keen to learn. Their skills and knowledge are average and they make very good progress in the year they are in the Reception class, so that, by the time they enter Year 1 most are likely to reach the expected goals for children's learning and many are likely to exceed them. This represents very good achievement for all pupils, whatever their ability.

Teaching and learning are very good because staff are all aware of the needs of young children and how they learn effectively. Lessons are interesting and capture the attention of the children. This results in them concentrating for long periods of time and being keen to complete tasks. Assessment is very thorough and helps teachers to plan lessons that are relevant to the needs of all of the children, whatever their ability. It also ensures that children make very good progress because they are not allowed to fall behind in any area of learning. Children with special educational needs are very well supported and those who are of higher ability work with older children so that they have work that is very well matched to their needs. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is very good.

Main strengths

- Children settle very quickly because of the very good induction procedures
- Children learn to be independent and choose activities for themselves
- Teachers have very high expectations of very good behaviour and attitudes

Commentary

38. The school has developed a very good working arrangement with the local pre-school whereby they use the school facilities for part of the week. Most of the children that come into the school come from this pre-school and so they are very settled when they arrive. They soon get used to the school routines and the staff are well known to the children. This has a very positive impact on their personal development, as they are rarely distressed and continue learning with little interruption. Staff encourage the children to choose activities that they are interested in and to concentrate for long periods of time. Consequently the children are well behaved and are very keen to learn. They become increasingly independent and enjoy being in school. The children play together well, including with pupils from older classes, and they share resources very well, cooperating very well in activities such as building a house for the three little pigs. Behaviour is exemplary.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is very good.

Main strengths

- Lessons are very interesting and capture the imagination of the children
- Children learn basic skills very well
- There are many opportunities for the children to act out their own experiences

Commentary

39. Lessons in this area of learning are very well planned and exciting for the children. Adults dress up to illustrate stories and this causes lots of discussions, where children develop a wide vocabulary of words and learn their meaning. This results in confident children who talk clearly and listen attentively. Early reading skills are developed very well. The children learn letter sounds and names and many know what sound two letters make when they are blended together. Teachers use resources very effectively to illustrate their lessons. "Boris the Bat" is a firm favourite with the children and this puppet is used to capture their imagination and keep their attention. There are many opportunities for role-play and the children enjoy participating in the many activities. They act out the stories they have read and make up their own stories using the good resources, including a wide variety of dressing up clothes.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is very good.

Main strengths

- Children learn a variety of mathematical language and use this confidently
- Well planned activities are practical and therefore relevant

Commentary

40. Children are confident mathematicians because activities are well planned and interest the class. Children count accurately to ten and beyond and are familiar with all the basic shapes. They experience practical activities that help them to learn about simple adding up and subtraction, as well as measuring accurately using practical equipment. When taking part in counting activities the children can count forwards and backwards and are beginning to count in tens. Children learn about patterns by having a wide range of resources to make their own, and by knowing the days of the week and the months and seasons of the year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development

41. Overall children make very good progress in these areas of learning because there are many planned activities that cover these areas. In **knowledge and understanding of the world** the children confidently use computers and design and make their own models using a wide variety of construction materials. Children had been heavily involved in making houses for the three little pigs and confidently talked about how they had made them and what they had used. They grow seeds and tend them as they thrive, discussing how they are growing and what they need in order to be healthy plants. In **physical development** the children learn how to use a variety of tools safely and with increasing control, and they learn how to throw and catch, using the wide variety of resources available. In **creative development** the children have access to a well resourced role-play area that gives them the opportunity to make up their own stories and act out their experiences. There are many pictures, displayed effectively, that celebrate the many opportunities that the children have to paint and make collage pictures. The provision for musical development is very good as the specialist teacher works with the children in the Reception year and ensures that they learn the necessary skills and knowledge.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is very good.

Main strengths

- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well because teaching is very good
- Lessons are very interesting and pupils are very keen to learn
- The subject is very well led and managed and this results in very good provision

Commentary

42. Standards overall are well above average by the end of Year 6. This is reflected in national tests, where results have been consistently high over the last few years, and in the work seen during the inspection. The school puts great emphasis on developing pupils as readers and writers, as well as confident speakers and listeners. So, although standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 are average, pupils are well placed to make very good progress in all aspects of English as they are confident in the basic skills. All pupils achieve very well.
43. By the end of Year 6 many pupils write in paragraphs and use a wide variety of punctuation correctly. They write for a range of purposes and use their skills well in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are very effectively supported so that they can make very good progress and achieve very well. Those pupils who are of higher ability are also supported very effectively and make very good progress. Reading is promoted very well and many pupils read at home as well as in school. They are very confident and express themselves clearly. Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils achieving very well.
44. Teaching and learning are very good. The school has made every effort to encourage all pupils by inviting a wide range of visitors into the school to support pupils' learning. The most effective of these has been the work carried out with professional writers. This has encouraged the pupils to think about how they write and how they put a piece of work together and has had a significant impact on standards across the school. Teachers plan very well and ensure that all pupils are included in their lessons. Teaching assistants support pupils very well and this adds to the progress that they make. Work is very well marked with encouraging comments and ideas on how pupils can improve their work and reach higher standards. Teachers have very high expectations and this is reflected in the handwriting seen in the school. This is neat and means that work is well presented. Pupils take pride in their work and are very keen to support each other.
45. The subject is very well led and managed in the school. This has resulted in consistently high standards because the progress that pupils make is very well tracked. Teachers know their pupils very well and this also contributes to the very good progress that the pupils make. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen and the quality of teaching has improved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Language and literacy skills are promoted very well in other subjects. For example, in science there are many opportunities for pupils to write clear explanations of their findings and give reasons for their conclusions. In history and geography, pupils are encouraged to write accounts of events and landscapes and use the skills and knowledge they have learnt in English very well.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is very good.

Main strengths

- Very good teaching meets the needs of all pupils
- An innovative curriculum
- Very good leadership and management

Commentary

47. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were well above average with pupils with special educational needs achieving very well in relation to their ability. By the end of Year 2, results in national tests are above average. Pupils with special educational needs show very good achievement in relation to their ability. Overall pupils achieve very well. Standards have risen since the last inspection. This is a direct result of a more innovative curriculum, which excites pupils, and makes them want to learn.
48. By Year 2, nearly all pupils are confident with number and use their skills well to solve simple problems. They have a clear understanding of shape and measure, for example, after measuring one side of the infant play area pupils used these measurements to estimate the opposite side, then carefully checked their work for accuracy. Pupils collect data systematically and produce accurate graphs of their results. By Year 6, all pupils have a quick recall of multiplication tables and use this skill well to explore complex patterns of numbers. They are very good at interpreting data from charts and graphs and finding the 'mean', 'median' and 'mode' of a set of figures.
49. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. All teaching demonstrates very good planning and preparation that ensure a very good match of the work to pupils' abilities. Careful preparation ensures that all pupils in the mixed aged classes have work that is appropriate for their needs. Lessons start promptly, the pace is brisk and no time is lost. Resources are very well prepared and meet the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is planned in an innovative way that captures the pupils' interest immediately. For example, pupils in the younger classes had written 'funny number tongue twisters', 'one wriggly worm', and 'two tiny toes'. As well as helping the pupils with their poetry skills this consolidated their mathematical development. Pupils in a year 5/6 class worked very keenly to find the 'range' of goals scored in the Euro 2004 football tournament. The teachers are very good at using a wide variety of methods to enable pupils to learn quickly. This always makes learning fun, even when testing pupils on their mathematical knowledge.

Example of outstanding practice- an enjoyable maths test for pupils in a Year 5/6 class

The teacher immediately captured the pupils' attention by playing some instrumental rock music. He paused the music and said "72' is your number to-day." As a result all pupils were alert and sat expectantly waiting for the questions. Many were tapping their pencils to the beat and clicking their fingers. "Halve it", the teacher said increasing the volume of the music as the pupils wrote down their answer. Ten questions were given in this manner each question became more difficult with the teacher supporting the less confident by saying "have a try," "or, "keep thinking." In finishing the test the teacher said, " now this question will sort out the men from the boys and the girls from the women!" The pupils laughed. They knew this would be the most challenging question of all. " Give me a factor which is also a square number". There was a buzz of excitement as the pupils glanced at each other. The more confident writing the answer immediately while others became more thoughtful before completing the task. Answers were quickly given and pupils discussed their results together as the teacher checked that all had understood and had learnt from the mistakes they had made.

50. There are very effective assessment and monitoring procedures in place. Rigorous analysis of statutory and optional tests identifies areas of the curriculum that need more work, and groups of pupils who are not achieving well enough. In these ways, analyses and assessment make a very significant contribution to the raising of standards. For example, weaknesses in data handling identified at the last inspection have been corrected in Years 5 and 6. Marking of pupils' work includes positive comments but does not always identify what they need to do to improve, particularly in the infant classes.
51. Leadership and management are very good and have been crucial in the raising of standards. Teaching and learning are carefully monitored and reports are written each term so that parents have a clear picture of how much progress their child makes at regular intervals. The

school has a very good understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and ensure that prompt action is taken to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. The school does much to improve pupils' understanding of mathematics in other subjects. In science and information and communication technology pupils have created bar charts and line graphs to show differences in eye and hair colour. During a design technology lesson the teacher's insistence on accurate measurement gave pupils practice in using rulers carefully and calculating perimeters. Overall the curriculum is very well planned so as to develop pupils' mathematical skills through all subject in the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good overall
- Pupils are not writing enough in the infant classes to promote the use of scientific vocabulary
- The science curriculum is very imaginative with a strong focus on the development of pupils' skills
- The subject is very well led

Commentary

53. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were above average. By the end of Year 6 results in the 2003 national tests were well above average. Inspection findings match the test results. Therefore pupils are achieving well by Year 2 and very well by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is better in the junior classes because more opportunities are given for pupils to write about their work. This is limited in the infant classes as too many worksheets are used to record facts learnt and pupils are not writing at length about their findings to promote their understanding of scientific vocabulary.
54. There is a strong focus throughout the school on the development of pupils' investigative skills. As a result, pupils gain good enquiry skills and their knowledge is underpinned by a good understanding of scientific concepts acquired through challenging practical and investigative tasks. By Year 2, pupils make good use of their own experiences when carrying out investigations. They give careful thought to what might occur and begin to draw reasonable conclusions from their findings. By Year 6, pupils have developed into young scientists. They explain the key factors to be considered in a fair test with very good understanding and, from the outcomes of their investigations, draw conclusions firmly based on secure knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for, because the tasks and activities meet their needs very well. Teaching assistants give them very good support. As a result, these pupils achieve extremely well to reach average standards in their work by the time they leave school.
55. Teaching is very good overall. Teachers plan interesting lessons with a good range of practical activities so that pupils can learn and develop scientific skills through first hand experiences. Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn because the way in which teachers present the work is exciting and enjoyable. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class had made model plants in their art lessons to revise the main features. Later during a lesson they used magnifying aids well to examine the different parts of a plant. Teachers check thoroughly how well pupils are doing and provide a high level of challenge so that they begin to think more creatively, for example, Year 6 pupils were set the challenging task of designing an alarm system to protect the theft of an exercise book. By carrying out this activity the pupils learnt a lot about electrical circuits and switches. Homework is used very effectively in Year 6, and pupils are keen to further develop their knowledge, for example by carrying out extra research into methods of

adaptation of animals to their environment. This means that more time can be spent on practical activities during lessons, which further develops pupils' investigational skills.

56. Leadership of the subject is very good because of the close focus upon raising standards through checking pupils performance and finding how teaching and learning can be improved. As a result standards have risen since the last inspection and improvement has been very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is good.

Main strengths

- Teachers are confident in the use of information and communication technology and plan well to provide appropriate contexts to teach specific skills
- There has been significant investment in information and communication technology and improvement since the last inspection
- Information and communication technology is planned well through other subjects

Commentary

57. Standards in information and communication technology are above average, and pupils achieve well across the whole school. By Year 6, pupils are working at or above the expected level in most strands of information and communication technology, particularly in the use of multi media and the use of databases and spreadsheets. Although historically there have been gaps in the provision of software in the older classes regarding word processing and monitoring and control, these now have been filled so that pupils get a full entitlement in Years 5 and 6.
58. There has been significant improvement in the provision of information and communication technology for Years 5 and 6 since the last inspection. Pupils lacked some basic skills in word processing and data handling and this has been addressed. Evidence shows that most pupils can organise, improve and present information in various forms and styles. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 had made 'power point' presentations comparing temperature changes related to cloud cover in their study of weather conditions in Elmsett village. By Year 2 pupils can use cursor keys and the space bar to enter a space between sentences. More able pupils can use a shift key to enter capital letters and can change the colour and font size to create colourful posters.
59. Although no formal lessons were seen, briefer informal observations of teachers and pupils using the network while studying other subjects showed that teaching was good. Teachers are confident managers of information and communication technology, personally and in front of the class. A key factor is the depth and clarity of planning that ensures that information and communication technology skills are used on other subjects. A curriculum map clearly identifies which skills are to be taught in each subject, and every pupil has a personal file showing exemplars resulting from the skills that are learnt.
60. Leadership and management are good. The school has invested heavily since the last inspection in providing a network of computers together with a computer projector. All teachers have received training to operate the new hardware effectively. A computer technician has recently worked with the school to establish intranet sites to match some topics on the curriculum. A computer club run for older pupils together with planned residential visits to a technology centre in West Runton, Norfolk, gives them further opportunities to consolidate their skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. Information and communication technology is used well across subjects of the curriculum. It is planned well to develop skills through other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 have collected data when comparing body measurements in science and have recorded the information in block graphs. During the maths lessons pupils have worked on programmes to reinforce their number skills and have collected information on the Victorians and famous artists in their history and art lessons.

HUMANITIES

There were no lessons seen in history, geography or religious education, therefore it is not possible to make an overall provision for these subjects and they have been sampled below. Other judgements have been made by looking at work, and by talking to pupils and staff.

62. Standards in **history** and **geography** are above average because pupils have a good understanding of the world around them and of events that have shaped the world. By the end of Year 6 pupils understand about a variety of mountain ranges and can compare the similarities and differences between them. Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning in geography and pupils use relevant programs to help them in their research. These skills have also been used in history so that pupils research topics such as Ancient Greece and develop a good understanding of what life was like in those times. In both subjects pupils use books and computers to find out about the topic, and they are also aware of the importance of using a variety of sources of information so that they can have a balanced view of events.
63. Standards in **religious education** are above average. Although no lessons were seen the work that is carried out on the life and customs in Angola gives the pupils a good insight into another culture and beliefs. Younger pupils learn about the needs of different people and have experienced sign language as a way of communicating. Assemblies are used effectively so that all pupils can learn stories from the Christian tradition as well as customs and beliefs from a range of other religions. A good example of this is the afternoon spent experiencing African dance, exploring the customs and beliefs surrounding the movements, and the African drumming workshop.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There were insufficient lessons seen in these subjects to make overall judgements on provision. However, from looking at work and talking to staff and pupils some judgements can be made on standards and these are reported below.

64. Standards in **art and design** are well above average because the school has a specialist artist on the staff who teaches at the upper end of the school. Skills are taught very effectively and all pupils benefit from this expertise. Work is very well displayed and this demonstrates that the school has given a high profile to the creative arts. Pupils have worked with an artist in residence and produced life-sized sculptures based on the work of Giacometti, these are permanently displayed in the school grounds.
65. Standards in **design technology** are above average. Pupils are encouraged to plan and evaluate their work and are very confident when discussing what they could do to improve their finished product. The curriculum is well planned so that the necessary skills can be systematically taught.
66. There was one **music** lessons seen, therefore few judgements can be made. Standards in singing are above average and the specialist teacher ensures that skills and knowledge are taught effectively across the school. This is evident in the planning for the subject. The curriculum is further enhanced by trips to see productions such as *Swan Lake* and *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*.
67. There were three **physical education** lessons seen, but not enough to make judgements on all elements of physical education. However, from the lessons seen teaching and learning are very good because the specialist teacher teaches across the school to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to experience a rich and varied curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. There were no personal, social and health education lessons seen during the inspection, but available evidence shows that pupils have many opportunities to learn about their growing

bodies and how to keep healthy. They also learn about the dangers of misusing drugs because the local police officer is a regular visitor to the school and helps support the pupils in their learning. Pupils also learn the importance of belonging to a community and in helping those who are from different backgrounds. Many visitors come into school to support the pupils and this contributes significantly to their personal, social and health education.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	1
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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