

INSPECTION REPORT

HONINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Honington, Bury St Edmunds

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124702

Headteacher: Mrs B A Burrige

Lead inspector: Mr M Thompson

Dates of inspection: 3-6 November 2003

Inspection number: 256500

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 Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	105
School address:	Malting Row Honington Bury St Edmunds Suffolk
Postcode:	IP31 1RE
Telephone number:	01359 269324
Fax number:	01359 269324
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Canon Sally Fogden
Date of previous inspection:	4 May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Honington Primary School is a small first school, catering for pupils aged from four to nine years old, almost all of whom are of white, UK heritage. There are no pupils with English as an additional language, and none are in public care. Most pupils travel to the school by bus or car. About two-thirds are from the nearby RAF base, and most of the remainder are from adjacent villages. The school occupies newly refurbished premises on a spacious site in the centre of the village. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is lower than in most schools. The nature of the pupils' special educational needs includes autistic and attention deficit disorders. Very few pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. To a large extent this is because the majority of families include one or more members of HM forces. As a result of regular changes in the deployment of HM forces personnel, a high number of pupils move into and out of the school during the course of each year. The school has received national Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2003, and its commitment to developing the potential of its staff has been recognised through an 'Investors in People' award. Overall, the home circumstances of most of its pupils, and their attainment on entry to the school, are about average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25372	Mike Thompson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music
12536	Sylvia Bullerwell	Lay inspector	
21893	Vivienne Brittain	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum English Special educational needs Personal, social and health education and citizenship Geography History Physical education Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Brookbridge & Bedford
13A Market Place
Uttoxeter
Staffordshire
ST14 8HY

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Honington Primary is an improved and **effective** school. Its success is built on the very good leadership provided by the headteacher, its good governance, the good quality of its teaching and the curriculum, and the effectiveness of its assessment of pupils' attainment. As a result, pupils achieve well, and standards in English and mathematics are good. Throughout the school, there is a clear commitment to continuous improvement and to raising standards. Although costs per pupil are high, this situation is not untypical of small schools. The school provides **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Overall, pupils achieve well. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and music.
- Children are given a very good start to their education in the reception class.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils well, and work closely with skilled teaching assistants to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school. Governance is good.
- The high turnover of pupils is managed very well.
- Pupils are very well behaved and are keen to learn.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work in mathematics and science needs to be improved. Practice in making pupils' aware of their targets for improvement is inconsistent.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work could be better.

Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have all been successfully addressed. These related to the need to improve the quality of teaching, the appraisal of teachers' performance, pupils' independence in learning, attainment in ICT and the role of subject coordinators. In addition, standards have risen in English, mathematics and music. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is better than it was, attendance has improved, the curriculum is better, and the quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governors has improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	C	A	A	B
Writing	B	C	A	A
Mathematics	D	B	C	D

*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*

Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment **achieve well** and make good progress. They enter school with standards that are broadly average and, by the time that they move to Year 1, most children are on course to exceed the goals expected of them. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, because of the high turnover of pupils, it is likely that when Year 2 is tested in the summer term 2004 it will not be the same group of pupils as seen during the inspection. In Year 4, standards are above those typically expected of pupils of this age in English and mathematics. In music, standards are above average in both Year 2 and Year 4. Standards are average in all other subjects, except design and technology

(DT) and physical education (PE) in which no overall judgements could be made. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

Overall, pupils' personal development is very good. Their attitudes towards learning are very good. Behaviour is very good, and boys and girls work and play together very well. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good**. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour; they plan lessons carefully and explain tasks clearly to pupils. They assess pupils well, and work very closely with skilled teaching assistants to ensure that pupils' needs are properly met, and so learning is **good**.

The curriculum is good. It is well planned and is readily adapted to ensure that, when newcomers have previously covered work being taught, they are provided with fresh challenges. Relationships with parents are very good. Links with the community and with other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership provided by the headteacher and her senior teacher is **very good**. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide good support to the headteacher. The management of the school is **very good**.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold their school in very high regard. Their views are fully justified.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that pupils are given better opportunities to practice their skills in ICT in all subjects;
- ensure improvements and greater consistency in the quality of marking, particularly in mathematics and science, and in making pupils aware of their personal targets for development;
- improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and the way in which they present their work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Throughout the school, boys and girls achieve equally well. Achievement is very good in the reception class and good in Years 1 to 4. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and music.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The high turnover of pupils has not significantly affected standards.
- Most children in the reception class are likely to exceed nationally expected targets for their learning by the time they enter Year 1.
- Standards are well above average in reading and above average in speaking and listening and writing.
- Pupils are particularly adept at working with, and manipulating, numbers.
- Pupils' good skills in literacy and numeracy help them to make progress in other subjects. However, not enough use is made of their skills in ICT.

Commentary

1. Over the past five years, the school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 has always been above or well above the national average in reading and writing. Its performance in mathematics has been more varied but, over the period as a whole, has been about average. This good level of performance overall has been recognised through two School Achievement Awards, in 2001 and 2003.
2. Owing to the very high turnover of pupils caused by movements of HM forces' families into and out of the local RAF base, year-on-year comparisons of the performance of year groups, and measurements of progress made by year groups, are unreliable. For example, of the 22 pupils who were in Year 4 at the end of the last school year, only nine had joined the school in the reception year and, at some time between reception and Year 4, a further 24 pupils had either joined or left the year group. Some of these pupils had left and returned more than once. Members of staff are very used to working within this climate of constant change. Induction procedures are very good, and teachers have become skilled at quickly assessing pupils on their arrival and adapting the curriculum to ensure that fresh challenges are provided for all. As a result, standards and achievement have not been adversely affected. However, the results of the national tests for Year 2 sometimes are. School records show that in 2002, for example, three pupils missed being tested in mathematics, and two of these had been assessed as being likely to exceed the national target for their age. The impact of this was that the average point score for mathematics was lower than it might have been, and this adversely affected the overall grade for the subject.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results for 2002
Reading	17.4 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.9 (16.5)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	17.4 (16.6)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The very good quality of provision in the Foundation Stage class (reception) ensures that children are given a very good start to their education. On entry to the school, children's attainment is about average. They make rapid progress and achieve very well because their individual needs are quickly identified and because they receive very good quality teaching and help. By the time that they move to Year 1, most children are likely to exceed the nationally recommended targets for this age group.
4. In Year 1 to 4, pupils achieve well because of the good systems put into place by the leadership of the school. Pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy is regularly and carefully assessed and, because teachers use this information well when planning their lessons, teachers' expectations of their pupils are very well informed. Pupils make good progress year on year because the curriculum ensures that their skills are developed progressively, and they are given good quality help whenever they need it. This is made possible because of the school's commitment to the professional development of all staff.
5. Inspection findings are that, at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards are above average in English, mathematics and music. In all other subjects, except DT and PE, standards are average. In DT and PE, not enough evidence was available for overall judgements about standards to be made.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress because of the high quality of support they receive both in class and when withdrawn from lessons for extra help and because tasks are carefully planned to meet their needs. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, many of these pupils achieve the standards expected nationally in English, mathematics and science.
7. Pupils' skills in numeracy and literacy are regularly practised in other subjects and enhance their work in these subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Year 1 used their emerging skills in mathematics to tabulate data about eye colours, while pupils in Year 4 used their writing skills to record ways in which different objects were affected by forces. However, opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance their work in other subjects are not always taken. This is because curricular planning does not identify links clearly enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The very good standards that pupils' achieve in this aspect of their learning reflect the school's ethos and its very good provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and their cultural development is good. Pupils' level of attendance is above average and there have been no exclusions. Punctuality is good. Most elements of the school's provision and pupils' response to it are better than reported at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to school and learning contribute to their good achievement.
- Pupils' very good behaviour contributes to the happy and orderly school community.
- Pupils' very good personal development makes them confident participants in all aspects of learning.
- Pupils have limited contact with people from a range of cultures.

Commentary

8. Pupils of all ages, including those who have special educational needs, enjoy coming to school. In all classes, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and each other, and confidently contribute to discussions and group work during lessons. They work hard and concentrate well, showing a high level of commitment to learning and achievement. Pupils' views of their school, expressed through questionnaires and discussions, are very positive.

9. There is a very good environment for learning in which pupils are very well behaved, both in lessons and around school. Pupils play very well together, and there is no evidence of bullying to support the concerns of about one in seven of the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire. These concerns were taken very seriously and the issue was looked at in some detail by the inspection team. Pupils show courtesy and respect towards one another, and sensitivity for others' feelings. They quickly make friends with newcomers and, as many are from HM forces' families, they understand the difficulties of moving schools.
10. Pupils' very good personal development is a result of the opportunities provided by teachers for them to appreciate, and reflect on, what they are learning in subjects such as art, music and science. Pupils understand and accept the standards the school sets for their behaviour, and are taught the difference between right and wrong. Pupils learn to be responsible. They take care when getting resources ready, and work together sensibly when clearing up at the end of lessons. Pupils willingly accept the responsibilities they are given, such as acting as monitors in classrooms. However, pupils said that they would like to be given more responsibility for helping in school. Pupils' knowledge of world faiths and cultures is developed through subjects such as religious education and geography, but they have limited experience of people from different cultures.
11. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to learning because work is well matched to meet their individual needs, and this enables them to achieve success. The school is a very inclusive community, and pupils with special needs are well accepted and integrated. They have positive relationships with staff and with other pupils. Pupils with behavioural difficulties respond well to positive management strategies and have secure relationships with staff and with other pupils.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.1
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

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

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good**, and as a result pupils learn well. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the reception class is never less than very good and sometimes excellent.
- Lessons are carefully planned to provide achievable challenges for all pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together, and are good at encouraging and engaging pupils in their learning.
- The marking of pupils' work in mathematics and science does not always help pupils to improve.

Commentary

13. The parents and carers who returned their pre-inspection questionnaires were unanimous in their view that teaching is good, and inspection evidence fully supports this view. The quality of teaching has improved since the school was previously inspected in 1998. There is more very good or excellent teaching and less unsatisfactory teaching. The proportion of teaching that is good or better is broadly in line with the national average.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	5	12	9	1	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.

14. The teaching provided for children in the reception class is a significant strength of the school. The teacher and nursery nurse work very closely together to provide consistently high-quality learning opportunities for the children. They have an excellent knowledge of the development of young children, and very good expertise in the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals¹. Activities are securely based on very good assessment of each child and, as a result, children are keenly interested in their work and have an appetite for learning.
15. Teaching is almost always good in English, mathematics and music and, because of this, standards are above average in all of these subjects. Where teaching is good, teachers have secure knowledge of what they have to teach and therefore they make their lessons interesting through their clear explanations and the crisp pace of their dialogue with pupils. Another important feature of these lessons is the way in which the challenge presented to pupils is carefully 'layered' and is gradually increased as the lesson develops. In most lessons, teachers plan thoroughly and are good at ensuring that the wide range of pupils' needs is met. This is generally achieved through the good quality help provided for lower-attaining pupils by skilled teaching assistants and through the additional challenges prepared for higher-attaining pupils. The best challenges are found in literacy and numeracy sessions, where different tasks are provided for pupils of different ability. In all lessons, teachers manage their pupils well and create a good climate for learning. The good learning that takes place is also due to the very good behaviour of the pupils and the high quality of the relationships between teachers and pupils. This occurs because the teachers provide good role models, command the respect of their pupils, and know them very well. The single occurrence of unsatisfactory teaching was due to inadequate planning, the consequence of which was that a number of pupils did not achieve well because their learning was not directed clearly enough.
16. Teachers are able to pitch work at a level which is suitably challenging for their pupils because assessment is good, and teachers use the information gained from their assessments to work out what pupils are to do next. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent. In subjects such as English, marking is helpful in improving pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation, and in helping them to redraft their work, but in mathematics and science, teachers do not regularly ensure that errors are corrected so that pupils can learn from their mistakes.
17. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together, and have formed very good partnerships. This good feature of teaching has been strengthened through the good management of the headteacher. Her commitment to teaching music throughout the school provides teachers and their teaching assistants with valuable time for planning and discussion of their monitoring of pupils' learning.

¹ The early learning goals are standards for each of the six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Most children are expected to have achieved these by the time they start Year 1.

18. The school is a very inclusive community. This is particularly evident in lessons. Teachers are very aware of pupils' responses and ensure that everyone is involved in whole-class sessions. Introductions are relevant to all, as are the concluding plenary sessions, in which learning is reviewed at the end of lessons.²
19. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good, and all teaching assistants have made a significant contribution to this improvement since the last inspection. Work is well matched to meet pupils' needs, basic skills are well taught and there are appropriate high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. Good use is made of individual learning plans to produce short-term targets which are challenging, but achievable, and these are reviewed regularly. Effective strategies are used to involve special needs pupils in whole-class sessions and to enable them to succeed. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, skilful questioning was targeted at a level which gave success to a lower-attaining pupil. The school caters well for those pupils who have very specific learning difficulties.

The curriculum

The quality of provision is **good** and is better than at the time of the previous inspection. Weaknesses in investigative learning, music and ICT have been addressed, and the basic curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through a variety of visits and visitors. The recent building project has been successful in providing pupils with good quality accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well structured, flexible, and enhanced by good enrichment activities.
- Good pupil-teacher ratios, and the use of teaching assistants, ensure that the curriculum caters well for the needs of all pupils.
- High quality accommodation enhances learning.
- Planning does not identify opportunities to use ICT as a tool to improve learning in other subjects.

Commentary

20. Since the last inspection, nationally agreed guidelines for all subjects have been put in place and the school has recently drawn up a whole-school plan to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed systematically. A particular strength is the way that the curriculum is adjusted to meet the needs of the regular intake of new pupils throughout the school year, and this helps newcomers to achieve as well as others. Weekly planning meetings involving teachers and teaching assistants ensure good working relationships in all classes. Planning for literacy and numeracy is thorough, and this has a positive impact on standards. Good use is made of additional strategies in literacy to help lower-attaining pupils, and members of the support staff have been effectively trained in teaching these strategies. The expertise of teaching assistants is enabling lower-attaining pupils to make good progress in lessons. The integration of ICT in other subjects is a shortcoming. The school has yet to fully exploit the potential of ICT because opportunities to use it are not consistently identified at the planning stage.
21. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). It is taught both within PSHE lessons and in other subjects. In religious education, for example, Year 3 pupils explored the benefits and responsibilities of friends and family and the importance of caring and sharing. Pupils are taught from an early age about healthy eating and care of their bodies, including drug awareness. Assemblies make a strong contribution in underpinning

² The plenary is usually the end part of a lesson when all pupils collectively evaluate the progress made.

pupils' very good behaviour and personal development. The school's positive and inclusive atmosphere reflects the good provision in this area.

22. Provision for all pupils with special educational needs is good. Their needs are well met, mainly in class and occasionally when withdrawn from lessons, by appropriate work and support. Pupils have detailed individual educational plans, of good quality, which are well implemented by class teachers and support staff. The targets set are short-term and achievable. Pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum. The improvements made to the accommodation provide good access for pupils with physical disabilities.
23. There are no after-school clubs because the vast majority of pupils live outside the village and are bussed to and from school. However, the curriculum is strengthened and enriched by many other learning opportunities. For example, there have been historical re-enactments such as one about the period of the Great Fire of London, visits from storytellers and theatre groups, and several visits to the cathedral in Bury St Edmunds to link with class work in religious education.
24. The accommodation has improved significantly since the last inspection and provides an attractive learning environment. It is spacious, clean and attractive, and colourful displays reflect the inclusive ethos of the school. Resources are generally good in all subjects, except ICT, where they are satisfactory, but further improvement needs to be made.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. The school effectively ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Members of staff provide very good support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school is satisfactorily seeking to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good support and guidance, enabling pupils to settle quickly into school, achieve well and be prepared for the next stage in their education.

Commentary

24. Parents' satisfaction with the quality of care provided for their children is fully justified. Leadership ensures that pupils are able to work in a safe and well maintained environment. Child Protection procedures are good.
25. In order to meet the needs of the high numbers of pupils who move into the school during the course of each year, staff are skilled in effectively assessing what newcomers know, understand and can do. This ensures that these pupils achieve well and make good progress. In the reception class, the very good assessment procedures and the strength of the teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistant effectively identify and support the individual needs of the youngest children as they start school. The smooth transition into middle school for pupils at the end of Year 4 is a result of the joint activities arranged with other primaries and the work started by them all in Year 4 and continued in Year 5. This means pupils know who they will share a class with and the work they do is continuous.
26. The school gives very good support and guidance for pupils' personal development through the very effective provision for their spiritual, social and moral education. Pastoral care is based on teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils through the effective partnership the school has with parents.
27. The school values pupils' views and gives them satisfactory opportunities to be involved in the development and work of the school, for example pupils helped to plan and design the outdoor

'story area'. However, there is no formal system for regularly incorporating pupils' views of the school. Pupils use a 'traffic light' system to tell the teacher how well they think they have understood what they are learning during lessons, but as yet do not contribute enough to setting their own targets or to reviewing their own progress.

28. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are well cared for; individual targets are set and the pupils' progress is reviewed regularly. The school has good procedures to identify pupils with learning difficulties at an early stage. They are quickly given extra help and their progress is monitored. As a result, of the early intervention no time is lost in helping pupils to achieve their best. The progress of all pupils is reviewed regularly against the targets they have been set. Pupils requiring extra specialist help, for example for physical needs or specific learning difficulties, are provided with additional support from outside agencies.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very effective links with parents and other schools and very good community links.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good links with parents means they are confident the school is doing its best for their children.
- There are very good links with the community.
- Very good liaison with other schools ensures that pupils are confident about moving schools and settle in well.

Commentary

29. Parents are very happy with almost every area of the school and its work. Induction arrangements are very good. School staff visit the RAF kindergarten and the mother and toddler group held in school, to meet the parents and children prior to the children's admission to the school. This is an important factor in the children's smooth transition into the reception class. Parents receive a useful induction pack of information about routines and procedures of the school. During a morning visit with their children, parents get to see the school in action and have a school lunch. They meet the staff and share a booklet of relevant information about their child, which they are asked to complete. Parents are then kept very well informed about school life through the school brochure, regular letters, newsletters and homework diaries. Curricular information for each year group keeps parents informed on what their children will be learning during the course of each term and enables them to help their children at home. A meeting with parents in the first half term of the school year has been recently introduced to share their children's targets and to discuss any concerns they may have. Parents meet with teachers each term to review their child's progress. They also attend two open evenings to see the work their children are doing in school. The annual written reports are of good quality, and tell parents what their children can do and are good at in all subjects. However, they do not include written targets for the next steps in learning or incorporate pupils' views. Parents appreciate they can come into school at any time, and the headteacher and school staff are available each morning before school.
30. The school made full use of the links it has with the community when the project to link the separate accommodation was started. Manpower and machines were supplied to demolish walls, lay foundations and create the central part of the 'new' school. Staff and pupils make regular use of the village and RAF facilities, such as the swimming pool, to enrich the curriculum, and the local RAF base provides good support in a number of other ways. For example, it supplies equipment for an annual sponsored obstacle course race. The school is used for meetings and events attended by the community. It also contributes to, and publishes, the village newsletter each month.

31. Joint activities are arranged between the six first schools which send pupils to Ixworth Middle School, such as days focusing on literacy or music, and a local farm visit. These opportunities enable pupils to meet their future classmates and build friendships and their confidence before joining Year 5. The farm visit is used as a focus for class writing, transferred to disc and used to produce newspaper reports when pupils are in Year 5, thus allowing them to share a common experience. The exchange of information about pupils and curriculum activities is very well planned to ensure the pace of learning does not slow during the transfer between schools. Blocks of work are supplied by middle school staff for English, mathematics, science and ICT, to be started in Year 4 and finished in Year 5. Pupils prepare their personal profile, and then during one of their induction visits work on this profile with Ixworth staff in the middle school's ICT suite. Follow-up meetings between staff in September allow two-way feedback on the effectiveness of the system.
32. The school has close links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and their views are taken into consideration at all times. Parents are involved in regular reviews of their children's progress and receive copies of all documentation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governors has improved since the last inspection.
- The headteacher provides very good quality leadership and is very well supported by her senior teacher.
- The strategic management of the high turnover of pupils is very good.
- The governors are knowledgeable, and are fully involved in shaping the direction of the school.
- There is effective teamwork and a shared sense of purpose among staff.

Commentary

33. The headteacher is totally committed to the school and the community in which it is set, and provides clear educational direction for its work. Together with her senior teacher, she has a very clear overview of everything that goes on in the school and provides a very good role model for staff. The headteacher knows the pupils and their families very well, because she teaches all pupils during the course of each week and because she is always available to parents - having a particularly high profile at the beginning and end of each day when pupils and their parents arrive and leave. A strong staff team has been created, in which all members work well together for the benefit of the pupils. The school's commitment to its staff has been recognised through an 'Investors in People' award. Communication between the small number of staff is very good and everyone is aware of the work being done in other classes. This ease of communication helps the subject leaders in their monitoring. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is generally monitored by the headteacher, and she has a good understanding of the strengths to be shared and weaknesses that need to be addressed. These observations form part of the staff performance management process, which is fully in place and in which staff targets for improvement are linked to the clear school priorities for development. Under her leadership the quality of teaching has improved, and this has resulted in higher standards in English and mathematics, in particular.
34. Governance of the school is good. Through the governing body, there are strong links with the local RAF base, which provides about two-thirds of the pupils. This helps to ensure that the particular needs of this community, such as the tensions that can occur when parents are away on duty, are fully understood and that the school responds to them. The governors know the school well, visit regularly, and successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school through their monitoring of its work, which includes links between individual governors and

teachers. Governors have ensured that legal requirements in all areas are fully met. They are well aware of the school's performance data, and apply principles of 'best value' well when making decisions. The good quality of the governors' decision-making process is evident in the school's very good strategic management of its circumstances, in which the high numbers of pupils moving into and out of the school can result in very large fluctuations in class sizes within a very short period of time. The local education authority provides good support in helping the school to cope with the changes in its roll by adopting a more flexible approach to the school's funding arrangements than is normally found. At the time of the inspection, the school reported higher than average expenditure per pupil and a high carry-forward figure in its budget statement. The higher than average expenditure is not untypical of small schools and, in the case of Honington School, the figure in the year reported is also a consequence of the level of movement of personnel into and out of the local RAF base. Similarly, the high carry-forward figure is due to the need for a larger than normal contingency fund to deal with sudden changes in its circumstances.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	329,864	Balance from previous year	43,014
Total expenditure	346,943	Balance carried forward to the next	30,781
Expenditure per pupil	3,154		

35. The provision for special educational needs is well led and managed. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is a 'link' governor who is fully committed to helping to raise achievement for these pupils, and she works in school each week with individuals and groups. Through regular contact with the coordinator, she has a good understanding of recent developments and keeps governors fully informed of priorities which need their attention. As a result, extra members of the support staff have been appointed and all have received relevant training. Alongside other staff, they keep abreast of recent developments at staff meetings and in training sessions.
36. School administration is efficient. It ensures that teachers are able to focus on their professional duties and are not diverted from their work by administrative tasks. The secretary knows pupils and their families very well, deals competently with day-to-day queries, and contributes strongly to the smooth running of the school. Financial administration is good. Governors are provided with regular statements of income and expenditure to help them to fulfil their responsibilities in monitoring the school's finances.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the reception class is **very good** and is better than at the time of the previous inspection, when it was judged to be good. Children **achieve very well**. Changes in provision in recent years have been very well led and managed by a skilled practitioner who knows how young children learn, and this has been an important factor in the rise in standards. Children enter the reception class in the September before they are five, with spring and summer-born children attending only in the mornings. All children have received some form of pre-school education, and their attainment on entry is about average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good or excellent in all areas of learning.
- The use of assessment to build on what children understand and can do is excellent.
- Thorough planning has a positive affect on the quality of lessons.
- There is a strong partnership between the teacher and support staff.
- Relationships between children and between staff and children are very good.
- The accommodation is good and has been improved by ease of access to a secure outdoor area where activities for all areas of learning take place.
- Good quality resources enrich provision.
- There are no significant weaknesses.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff have high expectations of children's capabilities.
- Children work in a calm, caring environment in which the development of good relationships feature strongly.
- Well prepared activities increase the independence of children.

Commentary

37. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority in the first term, and this enables children to settle down quickly and begin learning. Children respond well to the very good teaching and have very good attitudes to their learning. They achieve very well and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class. Children feel secure because of the well ordered routine and the knowledge of what is expected of them. They are confident to share their ideas, knowing that they will be valued. There are high expectations that children should be active learners; for example, very good learning took place when groups of children were finding out about ice by carrying out tests and coming to their own conclusions. Allowing children some choice develops independence, and those activities without a direct focus on the part of adults are structured well to allow children to learn independently. Children's concentration in group and class sessions is very good. They listen to each other and know how to take turns in speaking. Most children persevere and concentrate well when working independently at a chosen activity. They are able to co-operate when, for example, they play together with construction kits. Children's understanding of the importance of sharing was consolidated well by reading together the story of 'The Little Red Hen' to illustrate this concept. As a result, children who had made bread were happy to share it with their friends.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and members of staff make the most of every opportunity to develop language skills.

Commentary

38. Children's achievement is high and they are likely to exceed the expected level by the end of the school year. The development of speaking and listening skills is given high priority as a pre-requisite for teaching reading and writing. When children learn through play and investigation, they are skilfully encouraged to talk about what they are doing and the staff's questions and explanations help to increase children's vocabulary. Children report back to the whole class and are given time to express themselves. They speak with confidence and listen well to the staff and each other. Children enjoy listening to a variety of stories and are beginning to recognise rhymes and repeating patterns. The basic skills of reading are very well taught. All children have reading books and are beginning to read simple sentences, using picture clues to help them. They are taught letter sounds and many are beginning to use initial sounds to recognise words. Reading and story books are taken home daily to share with parents and carers, and this has a good impact on standards in reading. Children's writing is developing well alongside their reading, and some children are beginning to write their own sentences, using their knowledge of letter sounds to help them. Handwriting is developing well through regular practice of writing patterns and letter formation. All children can write their names, and they enjoy using the 'salt tray' to practise this skill.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is used throughout the day to develop children's mathematical understanding and language.
- Assessment opportunities are excellent and the information gathered is used well to plan challenging activities.

Commentary

39. It is likely that most children will exceed the goals for this area because of excellent teaching. Although only number activities were seen, photographic evidence and assessments from earlier this term show that children's experiences include early measuring and shape recognition activities. There are short, daily sessions for number songs and rhymes. In an excellent lesson, older children were working at well above expected levels when counting and sequencing numbers. Planning was built around careful assessment so that activities gave a high level of challenge. Strategies included much fun and humour, such as Jumble the Rabbit's muddled counting and, as a result, children were eager to recognise and correct 'mistakes'. The relentless pace kept children eager to learn. A key feature of the teacher's practice was the constant dialogue, developing mathematical language and challenging children to justify their answers. Children were able to sequence numbers correctly and carry out practical addition to ten. Two children correctly sequenced numbers to 20 as they completed a caterpillar jigsaw.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of activities are planned to extend children's experiences.
- There is a very good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated exploration and investigation.
- Members of staff have skilful questioning techniques which develop children's knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

40. Children are achieving very well because of very good teaching, and they are likely to exceed national expectations in this area by the end of the year. Members of staff plan a wide range of interesting activities which stimulate children's curiosity so that they want to learn. During the inspection, activities directed by the teacher included bread-making and investigations of ice and bubbles. When exploring an ice 'mountain' one child said, *'This is such fun!'* reflecting the enjoyment and interest of all children. Questioning was used very effectively to extend children's thinking about what was happening. For example, a child commented that *'the ice is melting and the water looks blue like the sea'*, and another said, *'The polar bear keeps falling off the ice because it's slippy.'* Photographic evidence and displays show that all aspects are being developed effectively. Children use computers independently and competently each day and are developing skills appropriately.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of the provision or standards because no large-scale physical activities were seen. Children have access to tricycles but these have to be ridden in the main playground, and this arrangement limits their use to certain times of the day. Planning indicates that children's skills are developed by weekly gymnastic sessions in the hall. There are good opportunities for children to use a range of tools, and children's cutting skills are average.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in the aspects seen during the inspection is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good range of activities to stimulate children's imagination and creativity.
- Resources are well chosen for interest.

Commentary

41. Children achieve well and are likely to exceed expectations in this area by the time they leave the reception class. The very good provision enables children to express their feelings through exploring a range of media and materials, music and movement, and through imaginative play. Children paint imaginatively, experimenting with different types of brushes and mixing their own colours to create firework pictures. Members of staff interact sensitively as children create collages with well-chosen materials. There are good links with other areas of learning; speaking skills are developed as they explain what they are finding out about the materials. Photographs show that children made good use of a 'dental surgery' earlier this term for imaginative play. There are regular opportunities to sing and to use percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with lower-attaining pupils.
- Standards are above average in all classes.
- Thorough planning has a positive effect on the quality of lessons.
- Assessment, including marking, helps pupils to improve.
- Handwriting is not being taught sufficiently well across the school.
- The presentation of written work is inconsistent in quality.

Commentary

42. Results of national tests at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily over the past few years because English has been a focus for school improvement. Pupils in Year 4 have maintained their progress in reading since the 2002 national reading tests and standards are likely to be well above what is expected nationally by the end of the year. Writing skills have improved from average to above average. Pupils currently in Year 2 are reading at well above the expected level, and writing is better than expected at this stage in the year. Pupils are achieving well throughout the school. Lower-attaining pupils are achieving as well as others because of the high quality support from teaching assistants, and tasks for higher-attaining pupils give appropriate challenge.
43. Speaking and listening skills are above expected levels for pupils across the school. This is because staff realise the importance of developing pupils' speaking and listening skills from an early age in order to help pupils with reading and writing. There are good strategies in place to develop speaking skills such as the use of 'talk partners' to share ideas, as well as the teaching of specific subject vocabulary, and these are used well in all classes. Pupils regularly report back what they have achieved in lessons and teachers give sufficient time to allow pupils to explain. This develops pupils' confidence when speaking in groups. Good use was made of drama in Year 4 when pupils planned and performed their own plays. Pupils are interested in their lessons and consequently they listen well.
44. Members of staff use a broad range of strategies to improve pupils' reading skills. These are well chosen to match pupils' learning needs. Resources used in the 'literacy hour' give pupils access to a wide range of styles of writing, and quality texts are used well to develop their competence. Graded reading books give structure and support to enable pupils to make progress. Basic skills, including letter sounds, are well taught. Pupils regularly read at home with parents and carers, and this helps their progress. In Year 2, higher-attaining and average pupils are reading above expected levels with confidence and enjoyment, using their knowledge of sounds to decipher unknown words. Pupils of lower attainment read simple sentences using strategies such as picture cues and initial sounds of words. In Year 4, higher and average-attaining pupils read challenging books with expression and enjoyment. A more able pupil could explain the meanings of verbal imagery in the text, such as, '*flopping about like elephants at a watering hole.*' Other pupils read competently at a lower level. Pupils talk with enjoyment about books they have read and are beginning to develop preferences for the work of authors such as Roald Dahl and Dick King Smith. Pupils are developing reference skills

well, and the library is well placed next to Year 4 for research use. All pupils have regular access to the library each week, and choose books to take home.

45. In writing lessons, work is well planned to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and grammar, and pupils practise these skills by writing in a range of styles. However, handwriting skills are not being developed well across the school and many pupils from Year 3 and above are still not using a 'cursive' joined script and are not forming letters of a consistent size. By Year 2, pupils are becoming more descriptive in their language. For example, a pupil of average attainment experimented with the sound patterns 'whiz, whiz, whiz' and 'fizz, fizz, fizz,' to describe fireworks in his poem. In constructing sentences, pupils usually use capital letters and full stops correctly and use phonic strategies to spell words, such as 'dropt'. Older pupils are able to write for different audiences and in a wider range of styles. By Year 4 they know how to plan and redraft their own work. The work of higher and average attainers shows the development of more complex sentence structures and punctuation. For instance, one pupil wrote, "Thank you dad," said Jamie, "you're the best!"
46. Teaching was good or better in three quarters of lessons observed, and is good overall. This is helping to raise standards because most pupils are making good progress in lessons. Teachers plan well and objectives are shared with pupils so that they are involved in their learning. The thorough planning provides a clear structure for lessons and ensures that a good balance is achieved between the different elements of each lesson. This helps pupils to learn well. The positive relationships established by teachers enable pupils to develop very good attitudes to their learning. Where teaching is good or better, there are high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Lessons move at a brisk pace and keep pupils on their toes. Effective questioning assesses pupils' understanding and extends it. In a very good lesson, the teacher targeted questions well in order to involve pupils of all abilities. They developed a good understanding of the use of speech marks because of the clear explanations by the teacher. Pupils showed their interest by asking questions about the punctuation in the text. Marking of work is good and focuses clearly upon what pupils need to do to improve their work.
47. The subject is well led and this has played a significant part in the rise in standards. Since the last inspection, members of staff have evaluated provision and there have been rigorous initiatives to raise standards in reading and writing. A good assessment system is in place to support teachers in planning and to monitor pupils' progress through school. Pupils have recently become involved in assessing their own progress. Targets are set termly, although not all pupils know theirs. Targets work well in Year 4; they are written at the front of workbooks and the teacher records progress so that pupils know how well they are achieving. Good use is made of additional strategies in literacy to help lower-attaining pupils, and members of the support staff have been trained to teach these. The writing initiative is ongoing in order to raise standards to the same level as in reading. Greater emphasis on the development of handwriting skills and the presentation of work in all subjects would help to achieve this.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

There are some opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects and these make a satisfactory contribution to attainment in literacy. Pupils use ICT infrequently for drafting, editing and presenting work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good.

- Teachers place a good emphasis on the core skills of estimation and the ability to identify patterns in numbers.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs.
- Marking is not used to help pupils to improve their work, and their individual targets for improvement are not always clear.

Commentary

49. Standards in Year 2 are above average and in Year 4 pupils' work is generally of a higher standard than is expected nationally for pupils of this age. Pupils achieve well and make good progress because of the good leadership of the subject, the good curriculum provided, and because they are well taught.
50. The year-on-year variations in the school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 are to some extent caused by the smaller than average numbers of pupils tested each year, since the performance of individual pupils can disproportionately affect the overall result. This factor is particularly relevant in the case of the current group of pupils in Year 2, since it includes a small number of pupils with acute special educational needs. Proportionately, these pupils represent about ten per cent of the number on roll. Results of the most recent Year 2 tests showed that standards were about average, and were not as good as in 2002 when the school's overall performance was above average. Inspection findings show that, when pupils with acute special educational needs are excluded from the calculation, the proportion of pupils currently in Year 2 who are on course to achieve or exceed the nationally expected level for pupils of this age is above average. However, because of the high annual turnover of pupils, it is unlikely that all of the Year 2 pupils observed during the course of the inspection will be at the school when the national tests are next administered in 2004.
51. Three of the four lessons observed were of good quality, and the other lesson was satisfactory. Teachers assess their pupils well through their questioning, and use the information gained to set achievable challenges at different levels, to reflect the range of pupils' attainment. Invariably, this 'differentiation' is based around a common theme, and so the introduction to lessons is relevant to all pupils and all are able to contribute to the plenary session, when learning is reviewed at the end of the lesson. Teaching is also successful because teachers make the lessons interesting. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and have developed very good relationships with their pupils. Throughout the school, teachers are good at nurturing the important skills of estimation and the ability to recognise patterns in numbers to aid calculations. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made very good use of a 'number square', on which the sequence of numbers from one to 100 was set out, to help pupils to see the patterns emerging as they counted on in tens. During a mental arithmetic session in Year 3, pupils made sensible guesses as to what the likely answer would be when challenged to work out three 'jumps' of ten before a number such as 223. The good quality help given by the skilled teaching assistants enables pupils with special educational needs to play a full part in lessons and, in the case of pupils with severe learning difficulties, ensures that pupils receive the individual attention that their needs demand. A minor shortcoming in teaching is the quality of teachers' marking of their pupils' work. Sometimes marking is hurried, and incorrect calculations are missed, and corrections are not used as a tool for improvement. Practice in focusing pupils on their individual targets for improvement is inconsistent. Where it is best, in Year 4, pupils have their individual targets pasted into the front of their exercise books for ease of reference, but this is not done in other classes.
52. The curriculum, which follows national guidance, provides good opportunities for pupils to experience all of the required elements of the curriculum. Pupils are given a good start in Year 1, through the good emphasis placed on practical activities as the basis for learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Mathematics is used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 successfully carried out a homework assignment in science in which they had to measure the heights, hand-spans and feet of members of their families. This activity provided a good opportunity for the practical application of the skill of measuring in centimetres and metres which had been the focus of daily numeracy lessons at the time.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Homework activities are used well to support the teaching and learning in lessons.
- Sometimes, pupils of different attainment are inappropriately given the same activities to do in lessons.
- The marking of pupils' work does not give them clear guidance about what they have to do to improve further.

Commentary

53. The results of the school's assessments of its Year 2 pupils during the summer term 2003 showed that standards were about average. This was an improvement on the 2002 assessment results. Inspection findings indicate that the current group of pupils in Year 2 is also likely to achieve average standards by the end of the school year. However, given the high turnover of pupils, this group is unlikely to be the same when assessments are due to be made in 2004. In Year 4, standards are also average. This represents a good improvement on the standards achieved by pupils in this year group when they were assessed at the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress as they move from year group to year group.
54. Pupils are given a satisfactory grounding in scientific method and, by Year 4, have a good understanding of the principles of 'fair testing'. Throughout the school, importance is placed on developing pupils' skills in investigating concepts for themselves, and a satisfactory emphasis is placed on pupils' use and application of what they have learned.
55. A scrutiny of samples of pupils' previously completed work showed that good use is made of homework to link in with lessons. For example, Year 3 pupils' research into the sugar content of packaged and tinned foodstuffs at home helped to reinforce their class work about diet. The same scrutiny showed that very often tasks are not set for pupils at different levels, to reflect their attainment, but are the same for all - with the quantity or quality of work produced providing the element of challenge. There are some exceptions, notably in Year 3, where higher-attaining pupils are, for example, given different worksheets to complete. In all classes, the quality of marking of pupils' work needs to be improved. Marking mostly consists of brief, positive comments such as *'Well done!'* or *'I really liked this!'* with areas for improvement generally overlooked. In some cases the intended audience for the marking is unclear, since some of the comments take the form of a brief commentary such as: *'Follow up from dentist'* to explain the context of a piece of work about dental health.
56. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The strengths in lessons are the teachers' good management of pupils, the high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the careful preparation of the necessary equipment. Sometimes not enough emphasis is placed on direct teaching methods, with the emphasis placed almost entirely on investigations by pupils; consequently the important additional level of challenge, which teaching would have provided, is not present. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, it was because planning was not good enough and, as a result, pupils' learning was not directed clearly enough. In all lessons, pupils were well behaved and worked sensibly together.

57. The curriculum provides reasonable breadth and balance and is enriched by pupils' participation in an annual 'science fair'.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The 'Transfer Project' for pupils in Year 4 helps pupils in their move to the local middle school.
- The way in which the curriculum is planned and lessons are taught needs to be reviewed.
- The school does not use its computers well enough.

Commentary

58. The school has responded satisfactorily to the key issue from its last inspection by adopting nationally recommended guidance for the curriculum to ensure that pupils' skills are developed sequentially, and standards have improved. Pupils in Years 2 and 4 are working at levels that are in line with those expected nationally for pupils of these ages. Standards in Year 4 are underpinned by the school's use of the ICT 'Transfer Project' for pupils who transfer to a neighbouring middle school. This ensures that the pupils in Year 4 are working to a similar standard as their future classmates.
59. The number of computers available for pupils has been improved significantly since the last inspection, and the ratio of computers to pupils is now in line with the national average. However, the school has not kept pace with improvements seen nationally in terms of the sophistication of its equipment, and this adversely affects the way in which the subject is taught. A 'whole class' approach to teaching means that teachers are limited in the way in which they can help pupils to develop their skills. For example, in a Year 3 lesson which focused on improving the quality of text, the teacher tried to teach the skill of highlighting text on screen to the whole class grouped around a single computer. Similar practice was also observed in Years 2 and 4. In these situations, the pupils' good response to the teacher's high expectations of their behaviour, their interest in their work, and their good skills in listening are important factors in the success of lessons.
60. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Owing to the short amount of time allocated for the direct teaching of skills, there was not enough evidence for a judgement to be made about teaching in the other session observed in Year 2. Strengths of teaching lie in the teachers' good management of their pupils and in the clarity of their explanations. However, the teaching does not always do enough to help pupils to develop their independence as learners. This is because sessions in which skills are taught are closely directed by the teachers and, within the time available, few pupils have the opportunity to immediately practise the skills learned independently.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. Not enough use is made of ICT in other subjects. Some links are made, such as the word-processing of parts of a science project about teeth in Year 3. However, the use of ICT is not an integral part of the planning in other subjects and, as a result, opportunities for pupils to practise their skills more regularly are missed. During the course of the inspection, computers were generally not used enough by pupils. Those located in the library were not seen in use.

HUMANITIES

No firm judgements can be made about provision in geography and history.

Commentary

62. In both **geography and history**, visits play an important part in making work interesting and this encourages the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, Year 4 pupils have good recall of their visit to a recreation of an Anglo-Saxon village and were able to talk informatively about the way of life in those times. They understand the differences between secondary and primary sources of historical evidence and realise that we know about the distant past mainly because of the work of archaeologists. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the similarities and differences between aspects of domestic life in Victorian times and today because of their study of Victorian household artefacts.
63. Throughout the school, pupils make good use of the village for geographical studies. In Year 4 they have developed their mapping skills well by comparing maps of the village over the past hundred years and looking for changes. They have made good attempts to draw their own maps, using Ordnance Survey symbols. During their time in school they have used maps of Great Britain and the world and have a satisfactory knowledge of various locations. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a satisfactory geographical vocabulary. They can talk confidently about life in a village and know, for instance, how it is different to a seaside resort they have studied. Good preparation and planning enabled Year 4 pupils to make good progress in the single lesson observed. Previous lessons, using the first hand experiences of visitors, gave pupils knowledge of everyday life in India. Using the stimulus of photographs, pupils wrote stories about what they could see in an Indian city. This helped them to consolidate what they had learned as well as develop their literary skills. Good links have been made with RE so that pupils study the customs and beliefs of Hinduism as they find out about life in India.
64. New schemes of work have been adopted since the previous inspection and have been adapted to meet the school's needs. However, these are insufficiently linked to other subjects, particularly the use of ICT. Portfolios of examples of pupils' work are used to exemplify standards and there is some monitoring of pupils' work, but this is in its early stages.

Religious Education

No firm judgement can be made about provision in religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of visits and visitors to strengthen the teaching of Christianity.

Commentary

65. Owing to the way in which the time table was arranged, only one RE lesson was seen. Other evidence has been gathered by talking to pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 and by a scrutiny of planning and pupils' previously completed work.
66. Visits and visitors play an important part in pupils' work in RE. For example, good use was made of the experiences of a former missionary to give pupils some insight into the Hindu faith as part of their study of India, and regular visits to the local church and to the cathedral in Bury St Edmunds have helped in the development of pupils' understanding of Christian belief and ritual.
67. Much of the teaching of RE takes the form of discussion and this enables pupils to practise their skills in speaking and listening. Pupils in Year 2 know the significance of major Christian

festivals and have a simple understanding of the value of friends and family. Year 4 pupils have developed their understanding of the benefits and responsibilities of friendship and understand the importance of caring and sharing. They know how Christians worship and the key rules and customs associated with Christianity. Teaching was satisfactory in the single RE lesson observed. Pupils learned that each person has special occasions in their life, but the concept was not sufficiently challenging for higher-attaining pupils and the content was insufficient for the length of the lesson. This was mainly because the lesson plan lacked structure and learning objectives were not identified.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. Music is reported in full below. However, there was not enough evidence for judgements to be made about the quality of provision in art and design, design and technology or physical education.
69. Only two lessons in **art and design** were observed. Further evidence was obtained from a scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work, discussions with teachers and curriculum planning.
70. Standards are broadly in line with what is expected nationally of pupils in Years 2 and 4, and pupils steadily develop a reasonable range of skills as they move through the school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about achievement in Years 3 and 4.
71. Overall, teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Good features of teaching in both classes are the planning of lessons and the teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour. In Year 2, noteworthy features of the lesson observed were the subject knowledge displayed by the teacher and the very good provision made for pupils who have acute special educational needs. These pupils were very well supported by a skilled teaching assistant, whose patience and very clear explanations helped them to play a full part in the activities planned.
72. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that pupils have experience in using a good range of media and develop their skills progressively as they move from Year 1 to Year 4. The work of a number of famous artists is used to good effect as a stimulus for pupils' work. For example, pupils in Year 4 carefully recreated the gradations in leaf colour evident in Andy Goldsworthy's 'Maple Patch' in their own arrangements of leaf prints and rubbings. In Year 2, pupils responded well to the teacher's focus on the abstract art of Wassily Kandinsky as they produced their own interpretations of his work by drawing overlapping shapes and using the properties of pastels well when blending colours. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing its provision for art and design.
73. In **design and technology**, no lessons were seen because of the way in which timetable was arranged and the curriculum is planned, and no examples of work produced by the oldest pupils were available. All of the evidence in DT came from samples of pupils' work from Years 1 and 2, discussions with teachers and scrutiny of planning.
74. Planning shows that design and technology is taught in different modules, which, over time, ensure that pupils experience the required breadth of the curriculum. In Year 2, skills are taught systematically. In a project based on 'Joseph's technicolour dream coat', various ways of joining materials were first examined before those appropriate for producing the 'dream coats' were decided. The finished products showed that pupils are able to cut and shape with reasonable accuracy and used a running stitch effectively to join fabric. Simple designs, which had first been planned out, were carefully reproduced on the coats, and skills in literacy were used satisfactorily as pupils wrote well-structured evaluations of their work.

75. In **physical education**, only two lessons were seen, both gymnastics, as well as part of a games lesson. Standards in these lessons were average. Teaching was good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. In Year 2, pupils made good progress in linking movements because of the clarity of explanations and the good modelling of movements by the teacher. There was a good balance between directed teaching and the opportunities for pupils to improve their skills. Pupils responded well to high expectations of behaviour, listening attentively and following instructions. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported by a teaching assistant, and this enabled them to play a full part in the lesson and make equal progress. Where learning was satisfactory, in a similar lesson, opportunities for the teacher to model techniques were not always taken. In an outdoor lesson, older pupils demonstrated satisfactory skills when trapping and passing balls with their feet.
76. By Year 4, most pupils have learned to swim because lessons are provided in twelve-week blocks during their final two years at the school. While accommodation for indoor PE is limited, the school makes good use of the space available, but outdoor areas provide good facilities. There are satisfactory opportunities for competitive sport with local schools for older pupils.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the headteacher's skills in teaching this subject throughout the school.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Commentary

79. Standards in music are above average in Year 2 and Year 4. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from good teaching. They achieve well and make good progress. The good standards previously reported in Year 2 have been sustained, and standards in Year 4 have improved.
80. Pupils' singing is of high quality. Throughout the school, they sing tunefully, clearly, and with good expression, and by Years 3 and 4 they concentrate well to hold a tune within unaccompanied two-part singing. Pupils' skills in using a variety of percussion are carefully developed and, by Year 4, they use these instruments confidently.
81. All music lessons are taught by the headteacher. This arrangement benefits all members of the school community because:
- pupils enjoy very good continuity in their learning, and this helps them to achieve well;
 - teachers and teaching assistants are given time to plan together;
 - the headteacher gets to know all pupils very well.
82. In all lessons, pupils responded very well to the teacher's high expectations of their behaviour. The very good climate for learning which was created ensured that they made the most of the well-structured opportunities provided for composition, performance and the evaluation of their work.
83. The best teaching was observed in a Year 4 lesson in which pupils were skilfully guided in developing a composition which conveyed atmosphere through their choice of instruments and the use of rhythmic pattern. They first listened to, and thoughtfully appraised, a passage from a composition entitled 'Elephant Trek', and then attempted to recreate the Indian 'feel' of the music. There were many spiritual elements within pupils' learning in this lesson, for instance the teacher's good technique of asking pupils to close their eyes and move in time to the music helped them to visualize the lumbering movements of elephants.

84. The subject is very well led and managed. Good use is made of ICT equipment, such as an overhead projector and a stereo system, to help pupils to learn. However, opportunities for pupils to use computer software are not an integral part of day-to-day planning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. Pupils are successfully learning to play a role as members of their school community. They are well informed about the need for rules, and have a good grasp of the consequences of anti-social behaviour. They are learning to make decisions and discuss their ideas on issues relevant to their own lives. Through 'circle time'³ activities, pupils are given reasonable opportunities to explore issues. For example, in Year 3, pupils were made more aware of the effect of their actions on others' feelings during a discussion which was sensitively guided by their class teacher.

³ Circle time is an activity in which pupils, seated in a circle, take turns to speak while others listen to what they have to say.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).