

INSPECTION REPORT

MILLFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

North Walsham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120838

Headteacher: Ms Catherine Parkinson

Lead inspector: Susan Walker

Dates of inspection: 13th-16th October 2003

Inspection number: 256921

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	370
School address:	Recreation Road North Walsham
Postcode:	NR28 0ES
Telephone number:	01692 403172
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alex Robinson
Date of previous inspection:	1 st February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Millfield Primary School is situated near the centre of the small town of North Walsham. It is bigger than the average primary school with 355 pupils on roll. The headteacher is comparatively new. There are more boys than girls in the school. Attainment on entry to the reception classes is wide ranging, but is below the Norfolk average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in mixed-age classes. More pupils join the school in Years 3 to 6 and for that reason class sizes are larger and so pupils are taught in single age classes. Most pupils come from the area immediately around the school, but a minority comes from further afield. Pupils live in a mixture of privately owned properties and rented homes and so socio-economic circumstances are average. Virtually every pupil comes from a white British background. The school has an average number of pupils who take free school meals. There is a Learning Support Centre for pupils aged seven to eleven who have a range of complex learning and behavioural difficulties. For this reason there are many more pupils with statements of special educational needs than are normally found in primary schools. The pupils from the Learning Support Centre join some classes in Years 3 to 6 from the end of the morning. The school is involved with a local initiative called 'The Children's Fund' and a national initiative entitled 'Creative Partnerships'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21678	Susan Walker	Lead inspector	Educational inclusion, English and information and communication technology.
14061	Leonard Shipman	Lay inspector	
4262	Tony Taylor	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, creative, aesthetic, practical, and physical subjects.
16930	Jeff Plumb	Team inspector	Learning Support Centre, and humanities.
22704	Garry Williams	Team inspector	Mathematics, special educational needs, personal, social and health education and citizenship.
22361	Marina Gough	Team inspector	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a large primary school, situated in North Walsham, which was inspected by a team led by Mrs Susan Walker between the 13th and 16th October 2003.

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is good and it provides good value for money. This is because leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are very good. This very inclusive school has a very clear vision for the future. Achievement, teaching and learning are all good. The very good ethos of the school ensures that pupils are well supported and so they behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning.

The school was last inspected in February 1999. Since the new headteacher arrived two years ago the school has made very good improvement across a wide range of areas. It has succeeded in finally addressing those weaknesses that were identified in its first inspection, such as the quality of the curriculum and assessment. There has been very good improvement in addressing the unsatisfactory aspects of management, which were identified in the second inspection.

Strengths and weaknesses in order of importance

- The achievement of all pupils is good, especially in English, mathematics and science. The achievement of the pupils in the Learning Support Base is very good.
- The 2003 national test results show that standards were well above average at age eleven in English, and above average in mathematics and science. At age seven, the national tests results show that standards were above average in reading and writing.
- Inspection findings show that standards are better than average in English at age seven and in science and physical education at both ages seven and eleven.
- The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment are good.
- Governance, leadership, and management are very good.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, as are pupils' attitudes, behaviour, and relationships.
- The curriculum is good with very good provision for pupils in the Learning Support Centre and very good curricular enrichment for all pupils.
- Pupils' care, welfare and support are good with some very good aspects.
- Links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are good.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation for the reception classes limit children's learning.
- Unsatisfactory resources for information and communication technology limits pupils' achievement.
- Higher expectations of handwriting and presentation are needed for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Achievement is good because this has been the focus of the school's improvement plan. Inspection findings show that the achievement of all pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs is good, especially in English, mathematics, and science due to good

teaching. The achievement of pupils with complex difficulties in the Learning Support Centre is very good due to very good teaching. At this early stage of the school year, inspection findings show that current standards are above average in English at age seven and standards in science and physical education are better than usual throughout the school. Elsewhere, from the sample of lessons seen, standards are average.

In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven, nearly a quarter of pupils were on the register of special educational needs. Standards were above the national average in reading and writing. The school had its best year for the number of pupils attaining better than might be expected in reading comprehension and a very significant improvement in the number of pupils who did better than expected in writing. Standards in mathematics and science were below the national average, although the school had slightly more pupils achieving better than might be expected in mathematics.

In the national tests for pupils aged eleven, results were better than average, the school made significant improvements and markedly exceeded its targets. In English, where standards were well above average, more than eight out of ten pupils attained the expected standard with nearly half of these attaining the higher level. In mathematics, more than eight out of ten pupils attained the expected standard and a third attained the higher level. In science, nine out of ten pupils attained the expected standard with more than a half attaining the higher level. Pupils did well in the light of their attainment at age seven.

Children come into the school below the Norfolk baseline. Most children in the reception classes attain the early learning goals and a significant number exceed them in personal, social and emotional skills because of the very good provision. There is an influx of pupils at Years 3-6 including those with statements of special educational needs.

Pupils' personal qualities including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.

The pupils' attitudes to learning and their standards of behaviour are very good. The school's provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and the pupils' punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching is good and so all pupils learn and achieve well. It is consistently strongest in Year 6. It is the headteacher's policy of concentrating on showing teachers exactly how to improve their practice, which has paid off. Pupils understand the purpose of what they are about to do in class and, in the best lessons, are able to evaluate what they have learnt. The range of topics that they study motivate pupils to learn and the curriculum is rich and interesting. Teachers use questions and discussions skilfully to find out what pupils know and to encourage them to think things through. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is used well to check what pupils can do and to plan carefully what they should learn next. The teachers of children in the reception classes and pupils in the Learning Support Centre are particularly skilled at doing this and so teaching is precisely matched to individuals' needs. This is an inclusive school and joining their fellow pupils for half of the school day considerably enriches the curriculum for pupils in the Learning Support Base. Although there are sufficient staff, resources and adequate accommodation, the school is aware of the need to improve the accommodation for children in the reception classes and the quality and quantity of resources for information and communication technology. Pupils of all ages and abilities receive very good support from the adults in the school. Links with parents, colleges, and the community are good, enrich pupils' learning, and give them a greater range of learning opportunities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership and management are very good.

The governing body, headteacher and staff work together as a very effective team to raise standards achieved by all pupils in an inclusive setting, because they have a clear vision of what they want to achieve for their pupils. The headteacher is a highly effective leader and manager and the management team is enthusiastic and well-focused on school improvement via the use of a challenging and rigorous long-term school improvement plan. Target setting and assessment are rigorous and energetic and there is excellent use of performance management to drive up standards through improving teaching skills.

The management of the Learning Support Centre and other special educational needs is highly effective. The governing body is highly effective and takes a full and active role in all aspects of the work in school. The school's finances are managed prudently and strategies are carefully devised to remove the current deficit budget.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are positive

Parents have ample opportunities to express their views of the school through personal contact with the headteacher and staff in and around the school, or by filling in the school's questionnaires. Their views are supportive, particularly of the very good induction into the reception classes.

Pupils' views of the school are very positive.

Pupils like their school, fully understand the school rules and are very appreciative of the efforts which the school makes to enrich their learning. They enjoy the responsibilities that they are given.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Improve the classroom accommodation for children in the reception classes.
- Improve resources in information and communication technology.
- Improve handwriting and presentation for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses.

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards in English at age seven, and in science and physical education at ages seven and eleven are better than might be expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The 2003 national test results show that standards at age eleven were much better than average in English, and better than average in mathematics and science. They were better than average in reading and writing for pupils aged eleven.
- Inspection findings show that current standards are above average in English at age seven and in science at ages seven and eleven.
- Standards in physical education are better than usual at ages seven and eleven.
- Most children in the reception classes attain the early learning goals and a significant number achieve higher than expected standards in personal, social and emotional development.
- The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good, especially in English, mathematics, and science.
- The achievement of pupils with complex difficulties in the Learning Support Centre is very good.
- Handwriting in Years 3 to 6 needs improvement.

Commentary

1. The range of attainment of the children on entry to the reception class is wide-ranging, but below the Norfolk average. Although children have some form of pre-school education, they do not have the benefit of nursery education before starting school. At the time of the inspection, one reception class of children was full-time and the other class was attending part-time until January. Nevertheless, **children make good and often very good progress and are effectively prepared for their move to Year 1. Most attain all the early learning goals by the time that they transfer. A significant number achieve higher than expected standards in personal, social and emotional development.** Children's attainment is due to a very well planned curriculum and good teaching.
2. Trends over time show that standards have been uneven from 1999 to 2002, with pupils aged seven generally more easily outperforming the national average than is the case with pupils aged eleven. This can be partially explained by the fact that the school has an influx of pupils in Years 3 to 6, many of whom have statements of special educational need, and so class sizes rise and the attainment profile of the class changes. The headteacher reviewed all areas of school life when she took up post two years ago and brought about a marked improvement in a short time. She overhauled all areas that needed improvement, prioritised improvement in standards and the quality of teaching and learning as the focus of the school's attention and used performance management as the tool to bring about the desired development. There is a well-crafted, detailed plan to improve standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology at both the expected and the higher levels. This is seen in practice in the staff 'operational' groups, where the school's vision is translated into practice. The results of the 2003 national tests demonstrated the strides which pupils have made and the very good leadership and management that the school now has in place.
3. In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven, nearly a quarter of pupils were on the register of special educational needs. Standards were above the national average in reading and writing. The school had its best year for the number of pupils attaining better than might be expected in reading comprehension and a very significant improvement in the number of pupils who did better than expected in writing. Standards in mathematics and science were below the

national average, although the school had slightly more pupils achieving better than might be expected in mathematics.

- In the 2002 national tests, the school's results for pupils aged eleven were well below average in English and science and average in mathematics. In 2003 the school made significant improvements and markedly exceeded its targets. In English, where standards were well above average, more than eight out of ten pupils attained the expected standard with nearly half of these attaining the higher level. In mathematics, more than eight out of ten pupils attained the expected standard and third attained the higher level. In science, nine out of ten pupils attained the expected standard with more than a half attaining the higher level.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (16.2)	16.5 (15.8)
writing	15.6 (13.9)	14.9 (14.4)
mathematics	15.8 (16.8)	16.6 (16.5)

There were 53 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	28.4 (26.0)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (26.8)	27 (26.7)
science	29.4 (27.6)	28.5 (28.3)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

The average point scores provide schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school as well as the average for all schools nationally.

- At this early stage in the autumn term, inspection findings show that standards in English are better than average at age seven and are in line with what would be seen nationally at age eleven. Achievement is good. Thanks to a well-planned curriculum, all pupils have lots of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. In reading, Year 2 pupils already know how to use their knowledge of letter sounds to read and write words that are not routinely in their vocabulary. Many eleven-year-old pupils read accurately both fiction and non-fiction and have a clear rationale for choosing texts. The handwriting of pupils aged seven is developing into an effective joined style, because they are given well-focussed opportunities to practice daily. The handwriting of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is untidy, not evenly spaced, or joined up and this does not allow them to present their work well enough. This is because the school has prioritised improving other areas of English.
- Current standards in mathematics are average at both seven and eleven and pupils' achievement is good. Trends are rising because of good teaching. Standards in science are better than average at both ages seven and eleven and pupils achieve well. Standards are now good at both key stages due to the impact of stronger teaching, a well-planned curriculum, clear purposes for lessons which are shared with the pupils, and the firm development of the pupils' science study skills.
- The fact that standards in English and mathematics are identified as being average at age eleven in the first half of the autumn term is a promising sign of continuing improvement and reflects the quality of the policies and procedures which are now in place. Teaching is strongest in Year 6 and there is a potential for improvement as pupils are challenged to enhance their learning still further.

8. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their writing and discussion skills in other subjects to support their achievement. Similar good opportunities are planned for pupils to use their numeracy and problem solving skills in subjects such as science, geography and design and technology. The opportunities provided for pupils to develop their computer skills in other subjects are more uneven and depend on the reliability of classroom equipment.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are average. Pupils' achievement is just satisfactory because the age and quality of the resources limits their progress. The school is to take delivery of laptop computers and extra digital cameras this term, which will allow more 'hands on' contact for pupils.
10. All other subjects are in line with what might be expected nationally for pupils aged seven and eleven, from the evidence seen, and achievement is good. As the best teaching is to be consistently found in Year 6, and often in Year 2, the potential for further improvement is good.
11. Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those few from other ethnic backgrounds. The school has a greater than average number of pupils with statements of special educational needs. Achievement of these pupils as measured against the identified needs on their statements is very good because of the very good and sometimes excellent teaching by the staff in the Learning Support Centre. They benefit from good clear individual education plans, which are monitored regularly to ensure that pupils make measurable progress. This agrees with the conclusions of the parents who feel that the progress that their children make is good. Pupils enjoy their learning and this helps them to achieve well. There were no particular differences in the learning of boys and girls observed during the inspection.
12. Generally, standards reported by the inspection team are similar to those found in the previous inspection report, with an improvement in attainment in science. However, it is obvious from the published national data that there has actually been a dip in standards between the two inspections. The school has now identified the more able pupils and this together with introducing a range of strategies to improve teaching and learning has enabled standards to rise.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' **attitudes to learning and their standards of behaviour are very good**. The school's provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development **is very good**. Levels of **attendance** and the pupils' **punctuality are good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' show very positive attitudes to learning in lessons, especially children in the reception classes and those pupils with complex learning difficulties.
- Behaviour in and around school is consistently very good due to effective staff management and parents praise the standards of behaviour in school.
- Very good attention is given to encouraging pupils' sense of awe and wonder through the very good ethos of the school and the variety of interesting activities provided.
- Moral principles of right and wrong, equality of opportunity, and care for others are promoted very well.
- The school's ethos, the very positive and supportive relationships, and the real sense of community, are very strong features of the school.
- The school explores a good range of cultural values and issues very well.
- Pupils' punctuality and their levels of attendance are good.

Commentary

13. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained the quality of pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and improved pupils' attendance. There has been a marked improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, which were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. This is because of the headteacher's very good management that has enabled the school to translate its vision into practice.
14. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good and embodies the very good ethos of the school. Many activities around the school contain uplifting elements. Assemblies linked to the teaching of Christianity, religious education about other faiths and beliefs are interwoven into the curriculum. There is a strong sense of moral purpose, in the rules of behaviour, the role models provided by adults and the quality of care provided. There is a strong inclusive social network, illustrated by warm, friendly relationships and teamwork amongst children and adults. In many classes a lovely sense of rapport exists between adults and pupils, which has a positive influence on their learning. Visits, for example, from musical groups, from members of other ethnic communities, involvement in local activities, and a very good range of extra-curricular activities, ensure very good development of the pupils' cultural awareness. Music makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The rapport and collaboration between adults and pupils working on the 'sound sculpture' was a joy to behold.
15. The majority of pupils arrive with a sense of purpose and excitement. They know that they are at school to learn. In lessons they are usually very keen to answer questions and confident in discussion. They are able to demonstrate their knowledge clearly and this helps them to achieve well. The more able pupils learn to work independently and are given good opportunities to do so. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given whether it is being part of the school council or helping others in the playground. Pupils' views are respected and taken into account and they state their opinions clearly to adults.
16. Children in the reception classes show very good levels of engagement and interest in their work and play and this helps them to learn. Pupils in the Learning Support Centre show very good levels of concentration and behaviour, especially when learning interesting facts. Their very positive attitudes and behaviour, together with very skilled teaching, enable them to make very good progress.
17. With very few exceptions, behaviour is very good and pupils move around school calmly and work purposefully in lessons. Courtesy and good manners are a common feature of the school. Most pupils' very good behaviour results from teachers' high expectations and this helps all pupils to learn and achieve well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive a very high level of support and respond well to this. Supervision of playtime is very effective and this is a fully inclusive period of the school day. Pupils play happily together and share the very good activities provided in harmony. Well implemented policies discourage any form of racism or bullying and support the very good relationships that exist.
18. The school has a number of pupils with complex learning difficulties and one pupil has been excluded for a fixed period.

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	370	9	0

19. Levels of authorised attendance are around the national average. The school is working closely with external agencies to solve problems relating to individual pupils' attendance, especially in the Learning Support Centre. These pupils are supported to ensure valuable education time is not lost. More parents are taking their children out of school term for holidays and the school is now working closely with parents to discourage this. Pupils arrive at school punctually, many with their parents or carers. Registration is taken swiftly and so no time for learning is lost.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
National data	0.5

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 is good.

- Teaching and learning are good.
- The curriculum and provision for pupils' support, guidance, and welfare are good with strengths.
- Links with parents and the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good teaching and learning policy has contributed to good teaching in the reception class and Years 1 to 5 with strong and excellent teaching seen in Year 6.
- The teaching is very good in the Learning Support Centre.
- The teaching in English, mathematics, and science (especially the investigative aspects) is good.
- The way in which the purposes of the lessons are shared aid pupils' learning.
- The effective use of questioning and discussion and teaching at a brisk pace aids learning.
- Assessment is good and has a clear impact on pupils' learning.
- The very good use of assessment to plan work for pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 and Year 6 helps pupils to learn.
- The teaching assistants are used effectively to support learning, especially in the reception classes.
- The use of homework supports pupils' learning effectively.
- There are good and sometimes very good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning.
- There are very occasional weaknesses in behaviour management, subject knowledge and organisation and so pupils do not achieve as well as they should do at these times.
- The quality of marking is good in the most effective classes, but it is an uneven feature throughout the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (7%)	10 (18%)	25 (45%)	14 (25%)	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	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.

Commentary

20. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and consequently pupils achieve well. Improving the quality of teaching and learning has been a school priority and the very clear teaching and learning policy guides the practice of all to match that of the most effective

teachers. Very good management by the headteacher has ensured that developing teachers' skills and deploying them to best effect have been a school priority. This has driven up pupils' achievement.

21. Overall, since the previous inspection the school has improved the number of very good and excellent lessons, whilst reducing the number of unsatisfactory lessons, due to very good leadership and management. The quality of teaching has also improved in the Learning Support Centre. Assessment was an area for improvement and this aspect is now good. At the time of the previous inspection, the use of day-to-day assessment was poor and no one was in charge of ensuring that assessment took place consistently. However, it has taken time to establish teaching of this quality and to embed the use of assessment into day-to-day working and this is why, although achievement is good, standards have not risen above the national expectations in all subjects.
22. Pupils understand what they are to learn, because the purpose of the lesson is shared with them in language that they understand. In the better lessons, teachers tell pupils exactly what they are looking for in their work and this makes it easy for pupils to evaluate their own learning. In other lessons, teachers give pupils easy opportunities to contribute.
23. Teaching is good for children in the reception classes and so most make good, and often very good progress. The planning of the day-to-day work of the teachers and teaching assistants is very good. Children are provided with a rich variety of experiences in a secure, friendly, and caring environment. There are many good opportunities for play and for directed activities. These are balanced well to ensure children's continued interest and involvement.
24. The quality of teaching and learning in the Learning Support Centre is consistently very good and often excellent. Outstanding teamwork between the teacher and learning support assistants results in pupils with a wide range of complex needs making very good progress when they are divided into groups for support with their mathematics, reading and writing. This team knows the pupils so well and use the specific targets on their individual educational plans very effectively.
25. Where teaching is strong, as in Year 2 and excellent as in Year 6, teachers know their pupils very well, frequently evaluate their learning and use the targets of pupils' individual education plans to direct their learning.
26. Teaching in the important subjects of literacy, numeracy and science is good and proceeds at a brisk pace. Experimental and investigative methods of learning science are promoted well. During the inspection, numerous examples were noted of pupils being encouraged effectively to carry out research from books and computer software, of making first hand observations, measuring, comparing data, and deciding how best to record their findings.
27. Teaching assistants are used effectively to promote pupils' learning. In mixed-age classes they frequently support the age group which is not the focus of the teacher's attention. They support the development of basic skills among the younger pupils. Because of good liaison between teachers and support staff teaching assistants are well prepared for their role in lessons.
28. Teachers use questioning skilfully to find out what pupils already know. They are good at including boys and girls of all abilities in these sessions. They challenge pupils to think for themselves. In Years 2 and 6, teachers are particularly effective at getting pupils to work out the answer from clues in the text. Discussion with other pupils and with adults helps pupils to sort out what is relevant and what is not.
29. There is a clear homework policy to support pupils' learning, which is implemented effectively to support the teaching of basic skills and to allow pupils to consolidate the learning they are beginning to get to grips with.

30. The quality of assessment is good, and is linked to improving pupils' learning. The school's priority is to develop comprehensive and analytical procedures that will drive standards upwards. For instance, in English evaluative records of pupils' performance in guided reading are kept and writing is assessed termly. As a result of this information, targets are set for individual pupils. In mathematics, teachers evaluate their planning against the ten key objectives and carry out assessment at the end of each term. Assessment is very good in the reception classes where the areas to be revisited in order to improve children's learning are easily accessible to all adults who work in the classes. Assessment is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2, more variable for pupils in Years 3 and 4, but is used skilfully in one Year 5 class and in both Year 6 classes to challenge pupils' learning.
31. There are very occasional weaknesses in behaviour management, subject knowledge and organisation, in a small number of lessons and so pupils do not achieve as well as they should do. Whilst overall the standard of teaching is at least satisfactory, this weaker teaching occurs in Years 3 to 5.
32. The quality of marking is mostly good, but sometimes lacks precision. At its best, in Year 6 literacy, it is excellent and makes pupils fully aware of how they have met the purpose of the lesson and tells them specifically what they need to do to improve. Pupils are appreciative of the quality of this marking.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum throughout the school **is good**. All pupils, including those in the Learning Support Centre and pupils with special educational needs **are offered a very wide range of enriched opportunities**. There is a **very good range of extra-curricular activities**. Staffing, accommodation and resources **are satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum offers a rich, broad range of enriched learning opportunities, including very good extra-curricular activities, which enable pupils to achieve well.
- The curriculum effectively meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, religious education, and collective worship.
- The curriculum planning in the reception classes is very good.
- The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are working well and the curricular provision for using and applying knowledge in science is of notable quality.
- The school identifies and plans specifically for the pupils in the Learning Support Centre, pupils with special educational needs and pupils capable of attaining the highest standards, and this is a strength.
- There is good quality outdoor provision for all pupils and children in the reception classes.
- Information and communication technology resources are unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- The classroom spaces in the Foundation Stage accommodation are small and cramped.

Commentary

33. Since the previous inspection, when it was an area for development, the school has made marked improvement in the curriculum and in the number of extra-curricular activities provided in order to enhance pupils' learning.
34. The school caters for the needs of all pupils irrespective of ability or aptitude and provides an enriched, well-balanced and well-planned curriculum to which all pupils have equally good access. This allows pupils to achieve well. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, including religious education. The standards achieved are the result of a good cohesive, well-planned curriculum complemented with very well enriched opportunities. The monitoring of the curriculum is achieved through a whole school approach, which gives the school a continuous

judgement on its teaching, learning and standards. The strategy for teaching numeracy and literacy has been successfully and consistently implemented throughout the school, underpinned with effective long, medium and short term planning to ensure equal of coverage in terms of time and content. Across the whole curriculum there are good opportunities to promote speaking and listening skills through the involvement of pupils when discussing the purpose of the lesson.

35. The curriculum for the children in the reception classes is very good. Staff plan very carefully to ensure that they overcome the limitations of the accommodation and resources and provide a rich range of activities to stimulate learning.
36. The school carefully uses outside agencies, when appropriate, to identify, and during the endings of lessons, plan for pupils with specific learning difficulties. This applies to pupils in the Learning Support Centre, pupils with special educational needs in the main school, including those with hearing impairments. Thus, individual education plans tailored by the school to meet pupils' learning needs are of high quality, very detailed and support planning, in order that all pupils will achieve at least their potential. Staff work well together, understand pupils' needs and respond appropriately. The teaching assistants are well prepared and involved totally in the process, documenting carefully their observations, which are then discussed with the class teacher at the end of each session.
37. Teachers work hard to plan the sequence of each lesson managing a range of interesting opportunities, such as the use of the music sculpture to excite pupils and make learning enjoyable. All pupils have access to at least two creative activities per term to improve their learning. The application of knowledge and skills in science, for example, is promoted successfully. However, the use of information and communication across the curriculum is inconsistent and the school acknowledges that further resources are required in this area to enhance keyboard and computer skills.
38. The quantity of teaching and non-teaching staff is satisfactory for the curriculum. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are not spacious, but they are set out to allow teaching staff to circulate amongst the pupils safely. Despite the efforts of the staff in the reception classes to overcome the difficulties of the accommodation, the indoor space and furnishings are restrictive, particularly to small group work and when the class gathers together. This in turns limits the provision of aspects of the curriculum. The new outdoor space for the children in the reception classes is a very positive advantage and it is used very well. The main hall is too small for whole school activities and, as a result, assemblies are split into the respective key stages. The accommodation does not permit a computer room or a series of mini suites to be created. The school is rightly proud of their new playground and resources where pupils can play and run around in total safety. Overall, the quality of the accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum, except in the case of information and communication technology.

Care, guidance and support

A strength of this inclusive school is the care and support each pupil receives. This is especially so for those in the Foundation Stage and for those pupils who have special education needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The procedures to monitor and promote child protection are very good.
- The provision of the pupils' support, advice and guidance is very good.
- The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The induction arrangements for pupils in the reception classes are very good.
- The provision for taking into account and acting upon the views of pupils is good and developing strongly.

Commentary

39. There has been positive improvement in the school's arrangements for caring for its pupils since the previous inspection. The health and safety issues from the previous report have been addressed. Two members of staff have been appointed to ensure health and safety is monitored regularly.
40. There are four fully trained members of staff responsible for child protection issues. All members of staff, including support staff, receive regular refresher training. The school has adopted locally agreed procedures well. Because the staff know the pupils so very well, they are confident that any concern would soon be noticed and acted upon. First aid procedures are effective.
41. The teachers have a very detailed knowledge of the pupils. As a result they teach to pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Some teachers use reassuring gestures to let the pupils know they are cared for. For all children entering school in the reception classes, the support, welfare and guidance is very good. Induction procedures are very thorough and any concern is targeted and monitored carefully.
42. The organisation of the special educational needs provision ensures that such pupils are confident members of the school community. Consequently, they achieve well and make good progress. All pupils with special educational needs benefit from good clear individual education plans, which are monitored regularly to ensure that all pupils make measurable progress. For those pupils being educated at the Learning Support Centre they receive a very high quality of support based on regular monitoring of progress. The school has very good liaison with all relevant external agencies to support learning or social development.
43. Pupils know that their views matter. The developing school council provides an effective channel to help shape the future of the school. For example, their input into the recently opened 'new playground and play resources' has been effective and important. The headteacher is constantly circulating and supervising playtime activities. As a result, pupils feel confident to speak with staff and this encourages their personal confidence and literacy skills. A recent innovation has developed the 'house system' into an extended family. Members of staff, learning support assistants and pupils meet as a group when pupils are encouraged to discuss matters that are important to them. The early signs indicate that the pupils' citizenship and maturity are developing very well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents responded positively to the questionnaires or interviews during the inspection.
- The quality of information for parents is good.
- The school has a school led 'parents involvement' scheme that is developing well.
- The impact of the parents' association, both in fund-raising and supporting the teaching and learning, is developing strongly.
- Strong developing links with outside agencies, such as 'Creative Partnerships', are having a sustained impact on broadening the pupils' learning.
- The school is part of a cluster group of schools filtering into local high schools. Thus the continuity of education is ensured.

Commentary

44. Since the previous inspection the school has been successful in improving the links with parents, other schools and the community. This is because it is a school priority and the school values the views of others. Whilst recognising that there is still some more to be done, more parents are coming forward to support the school. The views of parents are sought in a number of ways, such as questionnaires or a visible presence of the headteacher in the playground at the start of the day. The school has allocated two members of staff to co-ordinate the 'parents involvement' scheme that reaches out to parents and their goal is to raise parents' aspirations that their children can achieve success more easily. Success in the Year 2 guided reading initiative with parents will be extended to Year 1 pupils and reception children. Part of the future planning is to encourage parents of older pupils to become involved in guided reading. This will impact on overall standards in literacy.
45. Parents praised the very good induction system into the Foundation Stage. These close contacts give the parents confidence and the children a very good start to their education. For those parents whose children receive special education needs there is a very good level of communication. As a result, parents are fully included in their children's education.
46. Arrangements for communicating routine information to parents work well. The annual report is specific to each child and provides parents with a clear picture of their child's progress. Clear targets are included. Parents have mixed views about the impact of homework to support teaching and learning, but overall the views are positive. Scrutiny of homework diaries shows a two-way written communication and constructive marking by teachers. Complexity of homework increases towards the end for those in Year 6.
47. Parents help in the life of the school in a number of ways that improve the quality of education. Some help with reading, running the girls' football team or accompany trips. The enthusiastic 'Friends of Millfield Association' harnesses the commitment of the local community and businesses to raise funds for specific goals; for example, the new playground. As confidence grows, more parents are now volunteering their services to support teaching and learning in school.
48. In recent years the school has developed strong links with the wider community and these links are improving still. Students from Paston College and Norwich City College help in the Foundation Stage. Developing stronger multicultural awareness through the local education authority and the 'Creative Partnerships' is having a positive impact.
49. Very close links exist between the pre-school groups that ensure the smooth transition into mainstream school. The school is part of a local cluster group of primaries that feed into the local high schools. Good systems are in place that support both the parents and pupils from Year 6 into the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership by the headteacher is **very good**. The governing body is **highly effective**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body, headteacher and staff work together as a very effective team to raise standards achieved by all pupils in an inclusive setting. This practice is backed by a rigorous and challenging school improvement plan.
- The headteacher is a highly effective leader and manager.
- The management team is enthusiastic and well focused on school improvement.
- The target setting and assessment is being rigorously implemented with energetic determination.
- There is excellent use of performance management to drive up standards.

- The management of the Learning Support Centre and special educational needs is highly effective.
- The governing body is very effective and takes a full and active role in all aspects of the work in school.
- The school's finances are managed very prudently and strategies are being carefully devised to remove the current deficit budget.

Commentary

50. There has been marked improvement in most aspects of this area since the new headteacher arrived at the school. At the time of the previous inspection, aspects of management were unsatisfactory and the school lacked consistent practices and policies.
51. Leadership is now very good. The headteacher has a clear and accurate view of the school and she has created a sense of direction for the school based on '*a shared vision of success for all*'. This vision is underpinned by the belief that all pupils can succeed and that developing pupils' learning is the school's priority. The headteacher, staff and governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which have been developed through staff and governor meetings and through the work of the four operational committees. Through very good management, the staff is organised into these four teams to drive forward the school's priorities through analysis and evaluation. Together, they strive and work effectively as a partnership to develop strategies to raise standards within a very caring and sharing community.
52. There is a rigorous and challenging long-term school improvement plan and the staff display a strong commitment and will to move the school forward together, in order to raise standards of the school. Performance management is used outstandingly well to focus staff's attention on those areas and initiatives that the school wants to improve.
53. The headteacher is totally committed to inclusion; a philosophy shared by staff and governors. This philosophy permeates all areas of the school. The school is proud of its inclusive approach and all pupils contribute to the well-established culture of caring and sharing, learning and playing together. The pupils in the Learning Support Centre are integrated into all aspects of school life and only spend the mornings in their base to learn literacy and numeracy skills.
54. Though the school does not have a deputy headteacher at present there are two effective acting assistant headteachers. The present senior management team work very effectively as a cohesive team, under the skilled leadership of the headteacher. The team are appropriately deployed in the school to achieve the ambitious goals set by the governing body and staff at their recent in-service training day. In order to achieve their intentions, the team has correctly focused its energies on promoting and developing procedures and practices which are intended to drive standards up.
55. The co-ordination of subjects is good overall, but the school has placed a greater priority on developing standards through its four operational committees of staff. Where the school has used the subject as a lever to drive up standards, for instance in English, both leadership and management are very good and the co-ordinator is a very effective model for other staff. In other priority areas, such as information and communication technology, the co-ordinator has provided good leadership by teaching alongside staff to improve teaching and learning.
56. The school has recognised the need for rigorous assessment and realistic target setting if it is to realise its goals. The school exerts thoroughness over its target setting process and uses the information from day-to-day assessment as well as analysis of statutory and optional tests to set realistic targets. Pupils are aware of their individual targets and the school now intends to increase the involvement of pupils and introduce parents to support this area. The school has already developed this area well with the Learning Support Centre.

57. The management of the Learning Support Centre and special educational needs generally is effective. Special educational needs is led by the teacher in charge of the centre and the special needs co-ordinator. They provide high quality leadership in these areas and interact, support and share ideas and resources for all pupils concerned. This allows all such pupils to be fully integrated into the day-to-day life of the school.
58. The governing body is highly proactive and interacts very productively with the headteacher and staff. It is led by an experienced and very perceptive chairman. Plans, priorities, and strategies are structured jointly to ensure governance and operation is dovetailed to ensure the highest possible provision is available for all pupils. The budget is very carefully monitored in order that strategies to reduce the current deficit are fulfilled. It is also clearly aware that if difficult decisions need to be made, they will be made, with professionalism and sensitivity.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	799163	Balance from previous year	- 3976
Total expenditure	819013	Balance carried forward to the next	- 19849
Expenditure per pupil	2243		

59. The school correctly identifies barriers to learning as the restrictions of the building, which limits some activities, noticeably for the youngest children, and for the use of computers. The deficit budget has limited the school's ability to improve resources as much as it would wish to do. It has also meant that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in mixed-age classes, but this has had no discernible effect on the pace of their learning.

THE LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

This provision is **very good**.

- Measured against their prior attainment pupils make rapid gains in speaking, reading and mathematics.
 - The centre offers excellent support for a non-ambulant pupil as he is encouraged to move independently in his wheelchair.
 - A pupil with poor social skills is able to collaborate with his peers during a science lesson because of the very skilful manner in which he is supported by his learning support assistant.
 - Pupils with physical disabilities and complex associated special educational needs are fully included in every aspect of school life because of the very good leadership and management of the Learning Support Centre.
60. The Learning Support Centre (LSC) is staffed by a teacher in charge and three learning support assistants who work very effectively as a team to provide very high quality support and education for the pupils with these very complex needs. The pupils are taught literacy and numeracy in their base in the mornings and experience a rich and fully integrated curriculum with their peers in the main school classes every afternoon. The LSC makes provision for 12 pupils in Years 3 to 6, all with statements of special educational need. Very good provision is made for pupils with a very wide range of complex special educational needs including: ADHD, Tourettes, speech and language difficulties, Specific Learning Difficulties, dyspraxia, William's Syndrome, ASD and Ataxia Telangiectasia.
61. Achievement of pupils, as measured against the identified needs on their statements, is very good because of the very good and sometimes excellent teaching by the staff in the LSC. The non-ambulant pupil is encouraged to move independently and successfully manoeuvres his wheelchair in a small space when he needs to move to the front for the introduction at the start

of the numeracy lesson and when he needs to return to his worktable for his group activity. Pupils with very complex obsessional behaviours and who can be very challenging begin to manage their own behaviour quite well as a result of the emphasis on building their confidence and self-esteem. This in turn impacts very positively on their ability to concentrate and so learn. A pupil with autism has been taught to use a signal when other pupils are irritating him and this enables all around to calm a potentially explosive situation; the pupil in question is making very good progress in his communication skills.

62. The quality of teaching and learning in the LSC is consistently very good and often excellent. Outstanding team work between the teacher and learning support assistants results in pupils with a wide range of complex needs making very good progress when they are divided into groups for support with their mathematics, reading and writing. Because this adult team know the pupils so well and use the specific targets on their individual educational plans effectively the pupils make gains in important life skills such as how to use money when they go shopping. The teaching in the numeracy lesson observed was excellent. Excellent planning, effective teamwork, cracking pace and work matched to the need of each individual pupil resulted in all making excellent progress against their individual number targets on their individual education plans. Some were able to recognise a 5p whilst others could work out a range of different ways of putting coins together to make up 10 pence. Confidence was constantly built up by very skilful guidance of pupils' answers to questions; because pupils answers were so highly valued and built upon, all pupils achieved their planned learning outcomes by the end of the lesson. The skilful use of phonics by the teacher and learning support assistants has resulted in some pupils making rapid gains in their reading at a level appropriate to them. By the end of a literacy lesson, all pupils used very good descriptive language to describe a 'T Rex' at a level appropriate to each individual and all made a very valuable contribution to the construction of the class book on dinosaurs. Confidence, enjoyment and very good self-esteem are promoted through the teaching and this contributes to the successful learning. Ongoing assessment against the individual education plan targets is integral to the teaching and informs the planning for the next lesson; this strategy contributes to the very good gains pupils make.
63. The leadership and management of the unit are very good. As a result, parents of children in the LSC are thrilled at what has been achieved for their children. They know that they will be cared for very well and that they will be challenged. Parents are delighted with the way in which their children are fully included in every aspect of school life including involvement in swimming, school trips and performances. They speak highly of how the school has successfully enabled their children to make such good friends with other children in the school. The hatted accommodation used as the LSC is cramped. The dedicated teacher and her team have worked incredibly hard to make sure that they provide the best quality education possible for the pupils, but as the needs become ever increasingly more complex, the squashed accommodation becomes increasingly stressful for all concerned.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for Foundation Stage pupils is good, with a particular strength in the provision for children's personal, social and emotional development. The range of attainment of the children on entry is wide-ranging, but is below the local education authority average. Because **teaching is good** children make good, and often very good progress and are effectively prepared for their move to Year 1. Most achieve the early learning goals expected of this age group by the time they transfer. Overall, **planning of the curriculum is very good**, as is the planning of the day-to-day work of the teachers and teaching assistants. The children are provided with a rich variety of experiences in a **secure, friendly, and caring environment**. There are many good opportunities for play and for directed activities. These are balanced well to ensure children's continued interest and involvement. **Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good**. There is a clear vision for development, although this tends to be restricted by limitations in funding. The management of the stage is good. Staff show a strong unity of purpose. They have high expectations and a shared desire to see the children succeed. There are very good systems of assessment, and very purposeful links are maintained with local schools and support agencies to ensure continuity in the children's development. **Links with parents are very good** and many parents help in school.

The rooms for the two reception classes that make up the Foundation Stage are small and cramped. Despite the efforts of the staff to overcome the difficulties, the indoor space and furnishings are restrictive, particularly to small group work and when the whole class gathers together. This in turn limits the provision of aspects of the curriculum. The new outdoor space is a very positive advantage and it is used very well to support children's learning. The range of available equipment and apparatus is satisfactory.

There have been significant improvements to the Foundation Stage provision since the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for developing personal, social and emotional development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's achievement is good. A significant number of children achieve higher than expected standards by the end of the reception class.
- The teaching and learning are good, because this aspect of the curriculum is planned very well and the staff ensure development in each area of learning.
- The children enjoy school and behave well. They adapt quickly to the routines and expectations, and are eager to learn.
- Children of all abilities are supported well by staff, based on the information gained from very good systems for assessment and analysis of children's progress and needs. Those with special educational needs are very well supported.
- The unsatisfactory amount of classroom space makes it difficult to deliver key aspects of the curriculum.

Commentary

64. The caring staff, consolidated daily routines and a well-organised environment helps the children to feel secure and happy and achieve well. They grow in confidence and become

increasingly independent. The very good induction procedures, and very good links with parents and pre-school providers, ensure a smooth transition between home and school. The teaching is good and assessment is used very well and so staff seize the opportunity to promote this area of children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. This allows children to achieve well and individual needs to be met and a significant number achieve better than might be expected for children of their age. The cramped classroom accommodation means that some activities cannot be as fully developed as children and staff would wish.

65. This area of the school's work has improved compared to the findings of the previous inspection when it was judged to be good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for developing communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children reach the early learning goals by the time they transfer into Year 1 and their achievement is good overall.
- The children are keen to talk and to express their ideas. Most speak clearly and with increasing confidence.
- The children are interested in reading and writing. They respond well to the good teaching.

Commentary

66. The children have many opportunities to listen, talk and write. Whether in directed play or group discussions they are continuously encouraged to communicate and to develop their vocabulary, thoughts and ideas. The staff's very secure knowledge and understanding ensures that questions are posed at just the right level to encourage the children's involvement and development. Reading skills and early writing skills are promoted well. In one class, older pupils tend to dominate the class discussion sessions, but staff work hard to ensure that the younger children have good opportunities to contribute.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for developing mathematical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers' high expectations and effective planning of progressive work ensure that most children reach the expected standards by the end of the reception year.
- Numeracy skills are actively promoted in other areas of learning.

Commentary

67. Learning in mathematics is promoted well in numeracy sessions and in many other activities, for example, in water play, or science experiments, or drawing. Most children learn to recognise numbers, simple shapes, and measures and use them in solving mathematical problems. Teaching sessions are brisk and purposeful and build on the children's knowledge step by step. Mathematical vocabulary is carefully established and developed, and the children are encouraged to work things out for themselves and to explain how they have done it. The children develop firm awareness of sets of objects, and most can use language such as *smaller, greater, heavier, lighter, the same*. The findings for this area of learning are similar to those of the previous inspection.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for developing knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is good overall in this area due to the careful provision of a wide range of activities.
- The children build and construct with a range of objects and learn to use simple tools effectively.
- They are encouraged to use their senses as they investigate materials and objects and living things.
- The opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning are insufficient.
- The lack of adequate indoor space is restrictive.

Commentary

68. Limitations in the availability of equipment, including computers, and classroom space pose significant problems in provision in this area of learning. Nevertheless, teachers make good efforts to provide wide-ranging and beneficial experiences through careful planning and good use of support staff. The levels of challenge in the activities are often high and this encourages the children's development well. The new outdoor facilities are being used very effectively to extend the opportunities and experiences available to the children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for developing creative development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The opportunities to draw, paint, and explore colour are good. Here, the children's skills are developing well.
- The children sing tunefully and learn numerous songs and rhymes, which they can repeat from memory.
- Teaching is supportive, but not sufficiently focused towards extending skills, or developing children's preferences in forms of creative expression.
- The lack of space imposes some restrictions on activities.

Commentary

69. Overall, children's achievement is satisfactory and it matches expected levels. There are substantial planned opportunities for the children to use role-play, to design and construct and to be involved in music-making. Teaching is supportive, but not sufficiently focused towards extending skills, or developing children's preferences in forms of creative expression. The accommodation does not allow all activities to be fully developed or accessible on a routine basis as either teachers or children would wish.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for developing physical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children move with confidence. They are developing co-ordination and control successfully in their movements. They show steadily increasing skills in riding wheeled toys.

- The children show good awareness of space and each other when engaged in physical activities.
- The range of play apparatus is limited.

Commentary

70. Teaching is satisfactory. It is increasing in quality and perception as better use is being made of the new outdoor space. There are, currently, insufficient resources to ensure better provision for outdoor play, but the school has plans to increase these. Loans of equipment from other schools are being used to supplement resources. The children's achievement are average for the age group.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2 ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
- The national tests in 2003 show that standards were well above average at Year 6 and there has been a significant improvement in writing at Year 2, where standards were better than average in reading and writing.
- The current standards are better than average for pupils aged seven.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- Leadership and management are effective.
- Teaching is good, with the strongest teaching seen in Year 6.

Commentary

71. It is difficult to make a precise judgement about improvement since the last inspection because in 1999 the team reported standards were well above average by age seven and average at age eleven. It is clear, however, from national data that standards have been below average most years at age eleven. However, standards in English, especially in writing, are rising because of the school's focus on improvement. This is evident in the 2003 national test results for pupils aged seven, where there was both a marked improvement in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in writing, improvement in reading and very good overall improvement in Year 6. The school's operational group of staff, which is focussed on improving standards, especially in writing, has been successful in bringing this about.
72. Achievement in English is good for all groups of pupils, including those who are more able and those with special educational needs, because teaching is good and the curriculum provides pupils with a good range of interesting activities for them to enjoy and to demonstrate what they can do.
73. Teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of what young pupils can do. Basic skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2. In reading, pupils already know how to use their knowledge of letter sounds to read and write words that are not routinely in their vocabulary. Their skill at writing in a joined up style is moving on rapidly because of short sessions of daily practice. Pupils have good levels of success when writing in clearly defined sentences and collecting interesting words to improve their writing. The most able pupils are beginning to write about eight relevant sentences, use a range of punctuation and join their ideas together with a range of words such as *'but'* or *'then'*. Pupils understand about the need for a main character and can *'read between the lines'* in the text to describe his important characteristics. They read accurately, are beginning to read with expression, and the most able pupils are beginning to express opinions. Pupils listen well and take turns in conversation.

74. Standards of the current pupils are average at age eleven. At this early stage of the year it is not yet clear how many will achieve the higher levels, but teaching is strongest in Year 6 and pupils are frequently challenged to exceed their capabilities. Many pupils read accurately both fiction and non-fiction and have a clear rationale for choosing texts. The very effective technique of pupils writing notes to justify why they have highlighted sections of text on a worksheet enables the teacher to instantly assess who has achieved well in the lesson and where further reinforcement is needed. Although handwriting is taught in Years 3 to 6, it is not taught with the pace and vigour which occurs in Year 2 and so the outcome is less satisfactory. The most able pupils use a good range of punctuation and spell words accurately. Pupils listen well and express their views clearly.
75. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and so pupils make good progress. For instance, Year 1 and 2 pupils were very well supported in writing a repeating sentence by good questioning and the adult directing them to the important features of the task. Such pupils interact well with adults and are confident when responding to the questions directed to them in discussion sessions. Information and communication technology is used well to support day-to-day learning in some classes.
76. Teaching is good overall and so pupils work well together, keep on task and are anxious to learn. The purpose of lessons is shared with pupils so they can think about what they already know and prepare to learn new things. In the strongest teaching seen, lessons proceed at a brisk pace with the teacher and teaching assistant working well together. Tasks support pupils' learning. Pupils receive positive feedback on their learning, either through marking, or through evaluating their own work. Pupils of all abilities are involved in effective question and answer sessions. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, few of these characteristics are evident.
77. The leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator provides a very effective model of how to teach English. She monitors planning pupils' work and lessons, which provides a clear overview of standards and teaching. A greater depth of knowledge is obtained by analysing the national test papers to show weaknesses in pupils' understanding and areas that require a greater focus in teaching. The very effective use of performance management to raise standards in writing has been fruitful, as judged by the results of the 2003 national tests.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

78. The curriculum has been amended and enriched to ensure that pupils get good opportunities to learn both in the literacy hour and in other sessions. Pupils value these extra opportunities to learn. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills, such as writing lists and, giving reasons and carrying out research in other subjects. They are used particularly effectively in history, but more variably in religious education. There are many opportunities for pupils to consolidate their speaking and listening skills in, such as in research activities in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The standards in mathematics in the 2003 national tests for eleven-year-olds were above average.
- The quality of teaching is good and is strongest in Year 6.
- The pupils are achieving well, including those with special educational needs.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The pupils' attitudes are very good.

Commentary

79. Good quality teaching throughout the school is proving successful in improving pupils' learning. Effective planning and the use of an interesting range of methods support teaching during introductory sessions and endings to lessons. Many lessons begin with a lively oral session, which captures pupils' interests, challenging them to perform mental calculations and then having to explain their strategies to the class. Pupils' very responsive attitudes to work have been a key factor in beginning to raise standards in this area. Standards show distinct improvement and clearly indicate an upward trend, underpinned by good teaching. This is because raising standards in mathematics is a school priority. The effective implementation of the numeracy strategy is now resulting in pupils achieving well and is a clear improvement since the previous inspection. Effective teaching is characterised by clear identification of objectives, brisk pace, secure understanding of the subject and parallel planning to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils within year groups. When teaching is excellent, as in Year 6, it is the challenge and high expectations that drive up pupils' achievement. Marking is mostly positive and helps pupils' learning to move forward. However, where teaching is not effective it is interrupted by restless behaviour, resulting in teaching time being spent on managing behaviour, thus slowing the pace of pupils' learning.
80. Considerable success has been achieved, particularly in building pupils' confidence and enjoyment of mathematics through interesting and exciting approaches. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of number, shape, space and measures and their competence to apply their mathematical learning to different situations is satisfactory. The previous report judged that pupils in Years 3 to 6 were only making satisfactory progress in acquiring an appropriate level of mathematical skills and knowledge and there was a significant minority who made unsatisfactory progress. The report also indicated that although the pupils in Years 3 to 6 could carry out more complex calculations than those in Years 1 and 2, they found difficulty in using and applying their knowledge in other work. The school has worked hard to address these and other minor issues in a determined and systematic manner.
81. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Provision overall is very good and the support staff are used effectively to promote such pupils' learning. Where older pupils have specific targets in numeracy they are used to focus their learning in lessons. Adults sit alongside pupils and skilfully keep them focussed on the task in lessons. Teachers take particularly good care to include pupils with specific difficulties in lessons.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator monitors planning and identifies areas of support and training required for both teachers and assistants. She works closely with the mathematics consultant to discuss identified issues, through such activities as analysing results, and using data to inform future planning or why boys have been more successful than girls using 'counting up' methods to work out answers. She ensures that teachers are well tuned to the learning needs of individuals and works closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator on this issue.
83. In almost all lessons seen pupils displayed very positive attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully while the purpose of the lesson is discussed and they respond enthusiastically. During lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to work individually, in pairs or in small groups. This not only promotes speaking and listening skills, but also encourages the use of mathematical language and promotes their social and moral development effectively.

Mathematics across the curriculum

84. The basic skills of numeracy are well taught throughout the school. The mental calculation and problem solving skills are used across the curriculum in such subjects as science, geography and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The national test results at age eleven for 2003 showed a marked improvement on previous years and results were above average.
- Teaching is good and most teachers give good attention to the development of pupils' investigative skills.
- The curriculum for science is carefully planned.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Information and communication technology is not used consistently to support and extend pupils' learning in science.
- Teachers' marking of work and pupils' presentation skills are not good enough to support the development of the highest standards.

Commentary

85. The impact of stronger teaching, a well-planned curriculum, clear purposes for lessons which are shared with the pupils, and the firm development of the pupils' science study skills have all aided standards to rise. The previous inspection report stated that standards were average by age seven and above average by age eleven. Teaching varied between unsatisfactory and very good. Standards and achievement are now good throughout the school due to the fact that this is a school priority.
86. The area of the science curriculum that deals with experimental and investigative methods of learning science is fostered well. During the inspection, numerous examples were noted of pupils being encouraged to carry out research from books and computer software, of making first hand observations, measuring, comparing data, and deciding how best to record their findings. Discussions take place on what constitutes a 'fair test', and what equipment would be most useful in experiments and investigations. This is a strength of much of the teaching, and it has a very positive impact on the pupils' general attitude towards the subject.
87. The curriculum is planned well, from the children's early exploratory experiences in the reception classes to Year 6 pupils' revision strategies in the final terms. The programme of study is comprehensive and carefully builds on previous learning. The skills to be learnt are defined well and followed carefully in lessons. The pupils gain good levels of knowledge and understanding alongside their development of science study skills. Teachers usually ensure that the pace of lessons is brisk, and that activities have interesting and exciting elements in them that arouse the pupils' curiosity, causing them to think and reflect. The pupils' numeracy skills are effectively fostered, and their vocabulary for science developed well.
88. Teaching overall is good. The best teaching challenges all pupils, but particularly the more able pupils to think when it poses practical problems for pupils to solve. In lessons observed in each year group, no teaching was unsatisfactory. In the very best lessons, questions posed by the teacher promoted high levels of challenge, and the pupils' were encouraged to ask questions themselves, and to discuss their ideas and findings. Ample time was given for experimentation and exploration. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning.
89. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, because they interact well with teachers and support staff and benefit from this. Such pupils, including those from the Learning Support Unit are often distractible, but adults guide them very well so that they focus on the tasks that they have been assigned. In Year 6, pupils with special educational needs are readily assimilated into the class, very much included and their ideas and suggestions are valued.

90. In the occasional satisfactory, but less inspiring lesson, some good discussion and exploration took place, good support was provided for learning, but all pupils regardless of ability used a single worksheet to show what they had understood. Too little attention was paid therefore to challenging pupils of higher levels of ability in these lessons.
91. There are two aspects of the science provision that need to be improved. One is the development of information and communication technology as a further resource for learning. While there is some good use of computers to support pupils' learning, this is not general practice. The other is the improvement of teachers' marking of work and the pupils' care in their presentation of it. Teachers' marking does not do enough to promote pupils' awareness of what they have achieved and, what they need to achieve. Pupils' presentation of work is often very untidy, with poor handwriting, spelling and setting out. The pupils do not take sufficient pride in their work.
92. The leadership of the curriculum area is good because there is a drive for improvement and a strong sense of direction and purpose. Planning is carefully monitored and strong support is given to teachers to aid them in their knowledge and understanding of teaching the subject. Management of the subject's development is also good. Science is not a current priority in the school's improvement plan, but plans are in hand for targets to be set for year groups, classes and ability groups. There is a purposeful 'bridging' project in science in conjunction with a high school that helps pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient up-to-date reliable equipment at present and a lack of programs that do what pupils and teachers want them to do.
- There is no space in the accommodation to gather computers together, so that larger groups of pupils can access them freely.
- Information and communication technology is not routinely used to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Pupils' attitudes are positive.

Commentary

93. Historically problems with equipment and accommodation have restricted the use of computers. Although the picture seems similar to that at the time of the previous inspection, the school has in fact updated its computers to the best of its ability. It buys in technical support to deal with the glitches that occur in ageing computers. The school is soon to acquire a set of laptops that will be used by pairs of pupils in all classes and more digital cameras, but this has not brought them up to the level of equipment that is now being seen nationally.
94. The limited accommodation does not allow the school to develop a computer room, or even a series of mini suites in corridors and alcoves, in order to let pupils have more regular 'hands on' practice. The school intends to get round this problem by planning the use of a set of laptops and this shows the commitment that the management has given to improving provision in this subject.
95. Pupils achieve standards that are largely in line with what is expected nationally in those areas where evidence was available. Achievement is only satisfactory because of the equipment available. Pupils enjoy their lessons. However, teachers and pupils get frustrated with programs which, for instance, will not allow them to enter the data into the program in order to create a block graph. Much of the time in lessons is spent on 'pencil and paper' tasks that

prepare pupils for the task that they are to carry out on the computer. But such tasks do not allow pupils to practise their skills on the computer, as usually there are only three or four computers per classroom to twenty plus pupils.

96. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but is strongest in Year 6. Teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding to demonstrate step-by-step the skills that pupils are to learn. This is because the co-ordinator has trained staff in the correct techniques. However, pupils have to watch the demonstration focussed on one small computer screen in most classes. In the excellent lesson seen, the teacher constantly challenged and extended pupils' knowledge and understanding by the use of questioning, which deepened pupils' understanding. Skilful use was made of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate various elements of the lesson to their peers.
97. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately in lessons. For instance, in one Year 6 class they can open documents, select the style, and size of the font and save their work. They respond well to the encouragement that they receive from their teachers and support staff, but their ICT skills are restricted by their weak literacy skills. One effect of the deficit budget has been that teaching assistants have been withdrawn from ICT lessons, but staff receive good support from parents in some classes to compensate for this.
98. Leadership and management are good and have ensured that standards have not dropped below the national expectations. ICT is still a priority of the school's development and the school has an operational group of staff to raise standards. The co-ordinator's action plan already contains most of the identified areas for improvement. All teachers have been observed teaching and the co-ordinator has taught alongside staff to improve their skills. The school makes good efforts to compensate for areas of the curriculum where resources are not ideal, for instance, by borrowing equipment. Assessment is satisfactory and gives an accurate record of pupils' performance and progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

In some classes, teachers try hard to provide opportunities for pupils to wordprocess their work, reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills and to carry out research. The co-ordinator is a good model in this respect. However, at present the level of access for individual pupils is limited by the computers available and is not a regular and consistent feature.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

The provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 2, pupils readily appreciated that each one of us is special and Year 6 pupils understand that they study world religions so that they can learn to respect people who are different from themselves.
 - There is a lack of formal assessment to inform planning in order to raise standards.
99. Standards attained by pupils aged seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected in Norfolk's agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection.
 100. By age seven, pupils readily appreciated that each one of us is special. One Year 2 pupil said: "*My brother is special because he is generous and kind*". Because of satisfactory teaching based on appropriate techniques, religious education makes a satisfactory contribution to the

spiritual development of pupils. Although pupils aged seven have a reasonable understanding that Jesus performed miracles, they have a tendency to muddle and confuse his miracles with parables that he told. They know that the church as a special place for Christians is satisfactory and more able pupils can explain some of the ways in which a church is used.

101. By age eleven, pupils have grasped why it is important to study different religions. A pupil in Year 6 said: *'We study other religions so that we understand what other people do and so learn to respect them'*. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of festivals celebrated by Jews and Muslims, but a tendency to muddle them up. For example, one Year 6 pupil gave an accurate and detailed account of Pesach, but went on to say that this is how Muslims celebrate the end of Ramadan. However, by Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the main world faiths represented in Great Britain. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
102. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Satisfactory teaching is based on sound subject knowledge and a concentrated effort is made to bring what happens outside of mono-cultural Norfolk alive to the pupils. Satisfactory use is made of pictures and artefacts to teach about world religions and the pupils are challenged to think about what it would be like to be a Muslim or a Jew. Effective use is made of questions and the responses of the pupils are valued, as seen in a Year 6 lesson on Third World poverty. Because of very good attitudes to learning, pupils are confident to ask questions of their teachers and so deepen their knowledge and understanding of different religions and so achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils with specific special educational needs, including those from the Learning Support Centre are effectively guided by adults so that they see, hear and focus on the set tasks.
103. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator supports teachers throughout the school satisfactorily, and leadership makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The co-ordinator reports annually to the headteacher and governors on standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' work is not yet assessed using the end of key stage attainment statements in the agreed syllabus.

History and geography were not the focus of this inspection, but from lessons observed in history and scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils, **provision in history is satisfactory** and standards in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in history is good and there are good opportunities for pupils to discuss together.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to use their writing skills and to use computers to find out information.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, cultural and moral development.
- Whilst most teaching is satisfactory or good, some is not. Overall questioning is skilful and artefacts are used well.

Commentary

104. Good opportunities are provided in most lessons for pupils to ask questions and research information, for instance, about how rationing affected children during World War II. This develops and improves pupils' enquiry skills. Further opportunities are provided to increase their knowledge by listening to and asking questions of a lady who lived through the war as a child. The display of food allocation for a child for one week prompted astonishment and disbelief. The school made very good use of the celebration of fifty years of its existence by using displays to enable pupils to reflect on how times and opportunities have changed.

105. Pupils are given good opportunities to record what they know, to describe, to list reasons or to write their own account. In one class, six pupils using three computers researched information about food rationing. Pupils using the computers displayed competence in following instructions and confidence in using keyboard skills. They have good attitudes to the subject and this helps their achievement.
106. Overall, while teaching is satisfactory, it is too variable and ranges from poor to good. Where it is good, pupils are absorbed in their learning. Lessons are interesting, resources used effectively and the pace is brisk. When it is less than satisfactory, the pace is slow, organisation is poor and the management of pupils' behaviour less than appropriate.
107. In geography from the very small number of lessons seen, older pupils are making **satisfactory gains in their learning** about European countries and the local area. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of the use of maps. Leadership and management are satisfactory as the subject is not a priority for the school.
108. There is too little evidence in either report to judge whether standards or achievement have improved since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good levels of development have taken place since the previous inspection and this is being continued.
- A clear, supportive scheme of work for teachers has been established.
- A wide range of activities and skills are developed satisfactorily.

Commentary

109. The previous inspection judged that pupils' progress in design and technology was satisfactory, that the teaching seen was satisfactory, but that the scheme of work was inadequate and pupils did not evaluate their work.
110. Evidence gained in the current inspection indicates that considerable improvement has already taken place. There is a purposeful scheme of work and satisfactory provision is made for the subject at all stages. Scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work, and discussion with staff indicate that pupils experience a wide range of activities, across the required elements of the National Curriculum. Work seen includes, design planning and making of musical instruments, vehicles, puppets, for example. It also includes food technology, and evaluations of completed work. Discussion with older pupils shows that they evaluate their work and have a clear idea of how to improve it, either through using a different choice of decoration or different materials in construction. The pupils have been productively involved in larger projects such as the improvement of their school playground. They were awarded a certificate from Norfolk Architects for the quality of their planning and their use of a range of media to translate their ideas into practice. This reinforces the judgement that pupils' achievement is good, but they have not studied at this level for long enough to raise attainment above the national average. Teaching and standards are satisfactory from the evidence provided, as are leadership and management, and there is evidence of good development taking place.

ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in many lessons is good and this leads to pupils achieving well.
- Art and design is used effectively to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are given good opportunities to evaluate what they have learnt.
- The range of skills developed and media used is limited.

Commentary

111. Standards in art and design are satisfactory. The quality of the teaching in the lessons seen was often good, and purposeful introductions to lessons and carefully planned endings allowed pupils to review what they had learnt. Pupils enjoy art and design and work together collaboratively and this helps them to learn. Scrutiny of individual work and displays indicate that effective use is made of the pupils' individual sketchbooks as a resource for observation skills, designing and experimenting. Much artwork is linked very closely to topics in other subjects. While this is often relevant and purposeful, there is insufficient evidence of the development of a wider range of art skills, and the use of a sufficiently wide range of media. The pupils' abilities to make creative choices are sufficiently fostered. Boys and girls in Year 5 were given good opportunities to explain how they have made their clay models and to say what they would change. There is only limited evidence of attention being given to the works of other artists, or visits being made to nearby galleries. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory.

MUSIC

Provision in music is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good extra-curricular activities add significantly to the pupils' musical experiences.
- Music aids the development of the pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness markedly.
- The school's involvement in the 'creative partnership initiative' has made a significant contribution to the teaching and learning of music in the school.

Commentary

112. There has been good overall improvement in the width of provision in music since the previous inspection, because this has been a school priority. Pupils now get the opportunity to listen regularly to music from a wide range of cultures and times which improves their cultural development. Pupils have used their design skills effectively to make a range of instruments from other cultures. There is a very good range of extra-curricular musical activities, including a choir and two guitar clubs, to aid pupils' learning. The focus of the music provision during the inspection was the opportunity for all pupils to take part in a 'sound workshop' using the equipment in the new playground, as part of the 'creative partnership initiative'. The opportunity to work with professional musicians inspired pupils. Their achievement was excellent when making outdoor sculptures of sound. Pupils collaborated together with good humour moving from an awe-inspiring cacophony to improvising rhythm and volume harmoniously. Pupils did not want these spiritually uplifting sessions to end. Those pupils with special educational needs played a full part and were fully supported by adults. Singing is good in assemblies and practices. Teaching quality, standards, pupils' range of experiences and achievements in music appear to be rising substantially because of the vision that the school has to improve music and pupils' cultural experiences.

Physical education

Physical education was not a focus of inspection. Based on three games lesson observations, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Achievement in games skills is very good and by Year 6, standards attained in this aspect of physical education are above those found nationally. From the scrutiny of school records, standards in swimming and outdoor activities are also above those expected nationally by Year 6. The extra-curricular activities make a very valuable contribution to the development of pupils' physical skills. Opportunities for teamwork result in good social development and the residential trip makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Leadership and management are very good and have contributed to continuing good standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The way in which pupils' achievement is valued and rewarded.
- The way in which pupils' views are sought gives them a voice in running the school.

Commentary

113. Teaching in most classes supports and fosters high levels of confidence, endeavour and independence because of the supportive learning environment. Teachers give pupils opportunities to access their own resources. Achievement is recognised and rewarded. The school makes good use of opportunities for pupils to discuss matters of importance in '*circle time*'. By Year 6, lessons cover a good range of topics, such as problems at home or peer pressure and help pupils to assess their learning and develop their own strengths and overcome their weaknesses.
114. Pupils' views are routinely sought through the school council. They have had very good opportunities to make their views known about the new outside facilities and are helped to design precisely what would best contribute to their learning.

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	4
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).