

INSPECTION REPORT

STRADBROKE CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stradbroke

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124742

Headteacher: John McVicar

Lead inspector: David Cann

Dates of inspection: September 29th – October 1st 2003

Inspection number: 258050

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 -11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 132

School address: Queen Street
Stradbroke
Eye
Postcode: IP21 5HH

Telephone number: (01379) 384415
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Ann Baker

Date of previous inspection: 17th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stradbroke CE (VC) Primary School is a school for pupils aged 4 –11 years. The 132 pupils on roll live in the local village and surrounding rural areas. They are drawn from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. All the pupils are from a white British heritage. The pupils' attainment on entry is generally just below the levels expected for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and that for pupils with special educational needs are average. At the time of the inspection, there was a supply teacher in one class pending the appointment of a new deputy headteacher for January 2004. In addition, the school was undergoing the second stage of a long-awaited and necessary major rebuilding programme.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20009	David Cann	Lead inspector	English, information and communication technology (ICT), geography and history
14756	John Lovell	Lay inspector	
21103	Val Ives	Team inspector	Foundation stage, mathematics, design and technology, physical education and religious education
12116	Christina Morgan	Team inspector	Science, art and design, music and special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12 - 13
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	14 - 15
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	15 - 21
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good education for its pupils. The headteacher and staff create a very supportive and caring environment, in which pupils respond well. Pupils achieve at a satisfactory level and by Year 6, attain the standards expected for their age. Teaching is good overall with much very good teaching in Years 4 to 6, but there is too limited a range of practical and educational play activities for children in Reception. The headteacher provides clear leadership and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour and relationships are very good. Older pupils make a valuable contribution to school life and pupils are thoughtful and helpful to one another.
- The headteacher and staff work well together as a team and promote the very good family atmosphere which pupils enjoy.
- Staff provide very good advice and guidance for pupils which helps them to develop very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching and learning in Years 4 to 6 are often exciting and promote the pupils' interest and achievement well.
- Writing skills are not well developed for all pupils by Year 2, but the pupils make sound progress in literacy and numeracy by Year 6.
- The good support given to pupils with special educational needs helps them to make good progress.
- Pupils' knowledge of information and communication technology (ICT) is below expectations and is not developed across all aspects of the subject.
- Children in Reception do not have enough practical and play activities to fully develop their learning.
- Subject management is not effective enough to ensure learning is developed in all areas.

The school has made sound progress since the last inspection. The main issues have been addressed and the school has raised pupils' attainments and the quality of teaching.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	D	D
mathematics	D	B	E	E
science	C	C	D	E

*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.*

Overall, pupils' achievement is sound. The Year 6 pupils' test results in 2002 were below national averages but there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Results in 2003 tests were significantly better, and pupils achieved satisfactorily in English and mathematics, and well in science. Current Year 6 pupils attain the expected standards in all subjects except ICT.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils progress satisfactorily in reading and mathematics but their writing skills are below expectations. Their standards in ICT are below average.

Children in the Foundation Stage make sound progress in developing their personal, social and mathematical skills, but progress unsatisfactorily in aspects of language and communication and in their knowledge and understanding of the World.

Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and attendance are very good. Very good provision for pupils' personal development helps pupils understand their responsibilities to one another.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 4 to 6, very good teaching challenges pupils' thinking and promotes high standards of behaviour and application. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is sound and teachers are effective in developing good speaking and listening skills. At the Foundation Stage children do not have enough opportunities to reinforce their learning through hands-on exploration and play activities. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and staff provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.

The curriculum is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6, but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The school has very good links with the community and extends pupils' learning through a good range of visits, visitors, extra-curricular clubs and sporting activities. The current rebuilding programme is greatly improving the quality of accommodation.

The care and guidance provided for pupils is good. Teachers and pupils are very supportive of one another and value the contributions of individuals.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are sound. The headteacher and staff work well together to fulfil the school's aims. The school is run smoothly, even during the rebuilding programme. Subject managers, however, do not have enough opportunities to assess and influence the development of teaching. Governors are very supportive of the school but do not always ensure that developments are clearly focused and cost effective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally pleased with the school and the level of contact they have with it. Pupils are very positive about the school and talk about it with pride.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise pupils' attainment in writing by Year 2;
- improve the provision for children at the Foundation Stage to increase their range of practical activities and opportunities to learn through play;
- improve pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) and their use of computers in literacy and research;
- extend the way data on pupils' attainment is used to set targets for pupils and staff; and
- develop the roles of subject managers to improve the exchange of good practice in teaching

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum are covered.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The pupils' achievement is sound in Years 1 to 6 but at the **Foundation Stage**, children do not achieve well enough in all areas of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve good levels in speaking and listening throughout the school.
- Writing skills are lower than expected by Year 2 but pupils achieve well in writing by Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school.
- Standards in ICT are unsatisfactory and pupils are not taught all the required elements of the subject.
- Children in Reception do not achieve well in all the aspects of language, and in their knowledge and understanding of the World.

Foundation Stage

1. Children's skills on entry to the school are generally just below the levels expected, especially in their understanding of number. By the end of Reception, children achieve the expected levels in personal and social development and in their understanding of number. However, their achievements are unsatisfactory in aspects of language and communication, and in their knowledge and understanding of the World. This is because in these areas, the quality of teaching and learning has declined since the last inspection. Teaching does not give children enough opportunities to choose activities for themselves and learn from practical exploration and play. By the end of Reception, children have good speaking and listening skills but not a firm grasp of basic writing. Pupils achieve well in number but their knowledge and understanding of materials and processes are not founded in practical experience.

Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage

Standards in relation to the early learning goals by the end of reception in:	
Personal, social and emotional development	Satisfactory
Communication, language and literacy	Unsatisfactory
Mathematical development	Satisfactory
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Unsatisfactory
Physical development	No judgement
Creative development	No judgement

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

Key Stage 1

2. Pupils' achievement by Year 2 is sound in reading and mathematics but weaker in writing and information and communication technology. Although test results have varied considerably since the last inspection, pupils' standards have continued to be average in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing and information and communication technology have slipped since the last inspection. Teachers are effective in encouraging pupils to express themselves, and pupils speak and listen well in class and assemblies. Reading standards have risen over the last two years and current pupils read with interest and

understanding in well-organised reading sessions. Writing skills are below expectations for pupils of average ability and several have an unsatisfactory grasp of sentencing, spelling and punctuation. In mathematics, pupils are stimulated by good teaching, which encourages practical activities and good use of computers to extend learning. In science, pupils carry out regular investigative activities and achieve satisfactorily. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing skills in science and other subjects, and they make insufficient use of computers for writing. Higher-attaining pupils are well challenged in reading and writing and achieve good results. In the other subjects inspected, pupils achieve at a satisfactory level.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.3 (15.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.5 (14.7)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	17.5 (16.5)	16.5 (16.2)

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

Key Stage 2

- Pupils' achievement is sound in Year 6 in all subjects, except in information and communication technology. The quality of teaching is often very good in Years 4 to 6, and this stimulates pupils' thinking and eagerness to succeed. Of the pupils who took the 2002 tests, 40 per cent had special educational needs and results were lower than the national average. Test results in 2003 showed a significant improvement, and in English, mathematics and science, pupils attained standards above those achieved at the last inspection. Nonetheless, the school has identified areas for improvement and teaching is successfully extending the skills of more able pupils both in writing and in problem-solving in mathematics. In science, current teaching encourages pupils to learn from a range of investigative activities, which seek to raise attainment even further. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers in their learning and do not cover all the areas of information and communication technology to attain the expected standards. In the other subjects inspected, attainment was average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (27.6)	27 (27)
mathematics	25.1 (27.3)	26.7 (26.6)
science	27.6 (27.7)	28.3 (28.3)

There 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets and achieve well because they are well supported by teachers and learning assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

There are **very good relationships** in the school which promote **very good attitudes to learning and behaviour**. Pupils have very good opportunities to play a full part in school life and **attendance is well above average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes towards learning, and participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities.
 - The school is very effective in involving all pupils in school life.
 - The school very successfully addresses any issues of bullying and intervenes successfully to resolve problems.
 - Pupils are confident, value themselves and respect others.
 - Pupils respond very well to opportunities to display initiative and undertake responsibility.
 - Pupils' appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions is underdeveloped.
4. The school has maintained its very good approach to involving all pupils in school life, as noted at the last inspection. Pupils willingly undertake a wide range of tasks to help in the day-to-day running of the school. Older pupils are active in helping younger ones at break time, and as their reading partners. Pupils like their school and are very interested in what they are learning. Adults create a very supportive atmosphere and maintain very good relationships with pupils. This promotes pupils' very positive response to work, their caring attitudes and their constructive approach to helping one another. Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good both at break times and in all but one class, where staff changes have adversely affected the normally high standards. There were no indications of conflict or harassment between pupils during the inspection.
5. Pupils develop a good degree of self-knowledge and spiritual awareness through a well-balanced programme of personal education. Pupils discuss issues openly and articulately in class and learn to respect and value each other's opinions and beliefs. They have been involved in drawing-up the school's code on standards of behaviour and clearly understand their responsibilities towards one another. Pupils comment that they happily seek advice from adults in school and value the help available to resolve any personal disagreements. Although teachers seek to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures through visits and visitors, this is not implemented on a regular basis and resources are limited.

Attendance

The majority of pupils have very high levels of attendance and very good punctuality.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

There have been 3 fixed period exclusions in the past year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
132	3	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is mostly good and helps pupils to learn well. The curriculum is sound and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are cared for and supported well and the school's links with parents are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, with very good lessons observed in Years 4 to 6, but unsatisfactory learning for the children in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons for pupils in Years 4 to 6 are often exciting and stimulate pupils thinking well.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils which encourage them to apply themselves enthusiastically to learning.
- Pupils are often asked to work together in groups which effectively promotes good listening and speaking skills.
- While literacy skills are well developed across most subjects in Years 4 to 6, the development of writing is not well managed in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching at the Foundation Stage reflects an insecure knowledge and understanding of how young children learn.

Commentary

6. In Reception, teaching is unsatisfactory mainly because there are not enough opportunities for children to learn through practical activities and direct experience. Children are often given pencil and paper tasks linked to copying words and sentences. While teaching gives children good opportunities to discuss their ideas, the tasks they are asked to do are not appropriate to the learning needs of children at this early stage of schooling.
7. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is sound. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas and explain them accurately. While lessons are well planned in mathematics and science, writing tasks are not always pitched at the appropriate level for middle and lower-attaining pupils. As a result, pupils do not always obtain a firm grasp of basic writing skills by the end of Year 2. Teachers set tasks which involve worksheets and copied notes too widely. These restrict the pupils' opportunities to write in different ways using their own ideas.
8. Teaching is very good in Years 4 to 6 where well-planned lessons successfully engage the pupils' interests. Teachers challenge pupils' thinking with probing questions which help them explain their ideas to one another. Pupils respond maturely to the many opportunities given to them to plan and carry out tasks together, as in science and history research. Teachers are good at sharing objectives with pupils and refer to them as lessons progress, which keeps the pupils focused. However, they do not involve pupils in self-assessment at the end of sessions.
9. The quality of support staff is good. They establish very good relationships with pupils and provide dedicated and skilled support. This has a very beneficial impact on the quality of learning and enables pupils with special educational needs make good progress in line with their abilities.
10. Teachers carry out regular tests in English, mathematics and science to assess pupils' progress and they have a satisfactory knowledge of how pupils are achieving. The amount of information gathered in other subjects is not organised on a consistent basis, but staff maintain good and manageable records of how pupils develop. Teachers set targets for individuals and

groups of pupils to help them improve, which the older pupils in particular understand and appreciate. There is a need to develop better ways for younger pupils to be aware of their personal targets and to ensure that teachers keep them informed of their progress. Assessment for children in the Foundation Stage is not satisfactory, as it is not properly based on the Foundation Stage expectations.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7	6	8	2	0	0

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

THE CURRICULUM

A balanced curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection. It provides a good range of curricular opportunities to meet the needs of the pupils and to ensure progression in their learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of additional activities stimulates pupils' learning outside class lessons.
 - Teachers regularly modify their methods to provide a relevant and challenging curriculum for those in Years 1 to 6.
 - Good provision is made for personal, social and health education.
 - Very good links with the community greatly enhance the curriculum.
 - Unsatisfactory curriculum in the Reception class.
 - Insufficient opportunities for pupils in Year 1/2 to investigate and experiment in science.
 - Insufficient use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
11. Plans are regularly monitored and modified to ensure that there is continual challenge for the pupils through a relevant and stimulating curriculum. The English and mathematics planning is systematically monitored by the subject leaders. Leaders have been allocated to different curriculum subjects, but as the school is small, most of the monitoring and planning is done fittingly through whole-staff discussions. Consideration has been appropriately given to the building up of the teachers' skills in scrutinising the pupils' work.
 12. Good provision is made to develop the pupils' personal, social and health skills. For example, a Road Safety topic for the youngest pupils helps them to think about a safe place to cross the road and to ensure that they look and listen carefully. Older pupils in Year 6 keep a personal folder, as they appropriately consider the misuse of drugs. The provision for physical education (PE) has significantly improved recently with the building and opening of a new hall. This ensures that a suitable PE curriculum is delivered to the pupils. The subject is greatly enhanced by a good variety of sports that take place after school and at lunchtime. For example, there is good involvement with local sports clubs to provide specialist coaching for cricket, soccer and rugby. The use of the local secondary school's facilities considerably benefits the pupils learning, for example, in science, art and tennis.
 13. The curriculum for those in the Reception class does not meet the developmental needs of the children and lacks relevance. Pupils in Year 1 to 6 do not receive their full entitlement to the ICT curriculum. Not all of the programmes of study in this subject are covered in sufficient depth and opportunities are missed to use computers to support other areas of the curriculum. Insufficient practical opportunities are planned in science for pupils in Year 1/2 to investigate and experiment with materials in order to gain first-hand experience in the subject.

14. Although currently the accommodation is unsatisfactory, it is improving. During the inspection building works were taking place to improve the classrooms and play areas in the school and the plans indicate that accommodation should be good in the near future. There are sufficient resources to support the work planned and an appropriate number of qualified teachers and assistants to meet the demands of the curriculum. However, resources for religious education need augmenting. A good range of outside visits, including a three-day residential visit for pupils in Year 6, is regularly planned for all year groups and a good number of visitors are invited in to enhance pupils' learning.
15. The quality of the school's provision for special educational needs is good. An effective balance is maintained between allowing pupils full access to the curriculum and addressing their specific learning difficulties.

Care, guidance and support

The school has good systems for maintaining pupils' welfare, care and safety. It is very good at providing guidance and advice for pupils, and consults them very well to encourage their involvement in school affairs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good access to guidance and are confident about approaching adults for support.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are very good and they quickly adjust to school routines.
- Staff value highly pupils' ideas about school-life and the way it can be improved.

Commentary

16. The school provides good care for pupils' health, safety and welfare and has improved this since the last inspection. The headteacher ensures that child protection procedures are well organised and understood by all staff. The school maintains good standards in health and safety which are properly monitored by governors.
17. Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and staff have made improvements in the school's academic monitoring. The school makes good use of information gained from assessment to support pupils and has a very clear picture of the progress of individuals and groups. Induction procedures for new pupils are very well managed and, for Reception children, these build on the good links that staff maintain with the pre-school. Pupils with special educational needs are well aware of the targets in their individual education plans, and achieve them successfully. The headteacher is closely involved with the care and support of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties which ensures their participation in all aspects of school life.
18. The headteacher and staff are good at consulting pupils on their views and ideas. This high level of involvement helps to develop pupils' positive approach to the school and encourages them to take a pride in its maintenance and development. Pupils are routinely involved in arranging assemblies, maintenance of the play areas and are being consulted on planning a new playground. In class, pupils regularly work together to organise activities and eagerly take responsibility for gathering resources and information to do this.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory. Links are good with other schools and very good with the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the community are very good and enhance and enrich the curriculum.
- Arrangements for the transfer of pupils are good and benefit from good relationships with the secondary school and the pre-school playgroup.
- The school does not regularly provide curriculum information or workshops to help parents support their children's learning.

Commentary

19. Links with parents contribute positively to their children's learning. The school provides a good range of meetings so that parents can learn about their children's progress. The headteacher and staff are readily available for parents to speak to and informal contact is good. The information provided for parents in reports is satisfactory but information on the topics to be studied is not regularly provided. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly involved in reviews of their children's individual education plans. For these pupils, there is good support from outside agencies and parents are well informed of their children's progress.
20. The school makes very good use of visitors from the local community to talk to pupils, as well as ensuring that pupils learn the history of their village and the geography of the immediate locality. Pupils are given vital lessons in road safety by walking through the village and seeing safe places to cross the road. Fund-raising by the Friends of Stradbroke successfully supports the work of the school, and has provided additional resources as well as supporting visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning. The annual residential trip for older pupils is well managed to stimulate pupils' experience and learning.
21. The Reception and the pre-school maintain close contact, as well as sharing resources and visitors on occasions. This helps pupils transfer easily into Reception and they settle quickly into school routines. Similarly, there are good links with the local secondary school and pupils benefit from regular visits to use computers, science resources, sports facilities and to take part in workshops and courses. Staff training events are well managed and shared with local schools in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides **clear leadership** and supports his staff well, but key staff do not have enough time to influence school developments. **Management is sound** and **governance is satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher consults staff well and provides a supportive environment for their work.
- The school analyses its results but does not use the information to set clear areas for development.
- The roles of subject leaders are not developed sufficiently well to allow them to extend good practice in teaching and learning.
- Governors are very supportive of the school but do not evaluate the cost effectiveness of all spending rigorously enough.

Commentary

22. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors ensure that the school's aims and policies are both clear and implemented. They help to shape these through close liaison with the headteacher and staff, and meet regularly to monitor the school's performance. Governors understand their roles well. They are active in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement for support and are properly included in the school. Governors are well involved in agreeing budgets and monitoring expenditure. They understand

the principles of obtaining good value but do not ensure the school regularly measures the effectiveness of staff expenditure.

23. Leadership generates a strong drive for improvement which is shared by all staff. The headteacher is committed to ensuring that staff reflect the school's aims and policies in all their work and the school's very supportive ethos is testimony to this. Curriculum leadership is less well developed, even in key areas such as literacy and numeracy, and is unsatisfactory in ICT. Teachers work together well to monitor pupils' work but this information is not always used well enough to define ways of making measurable improvements in pupils' achievements. Importantly, there is not enough regular monitoring to ensure that the aims agreed in subject action plans are implemented in lesson planning and teaching. This reduces their effectiveness as a means of improving teaching and learning.
24. The school is managed efficiently even during the major upheavals of the rebuilding programme. The headteacher makes good use of performance management systems to help teachers and non-teaching staff to improve skills. Staff benefit from attending courses and sharing expertise with colleagues from other schools and there are good links with the local secondary school. However, there are only limited opportunities to observe effective teaching in other schools, for example, to help improve the school's own practice in the Foundation Stage. Financial management is of good quality and the school's higher-than-average surplus is suitably destined for resourcing and completing the building programme currently under way.
25. The school is well aware of the aids and barriers which confront it. The headteacher and staff are making better use of performance data to assess the school's progress and are learning to use this to pinpoint areas for development. They identify the professional skills which they need to develop in subject management, work scrutiny and lesson observation but have yet to take important steps forward to effectively address these areas. The appointment of a new deputy headteacher is also seen as a major opportunity for the school to extend subject expertise and complement the existing skills of staff.
26. The management of special educational needs is good. The headteacher's expertise in this area ensures high quality provision which meets the needs of individual pupils. However, there are no formal systems in place to ensure that the provision for gifted and talented pupils is developed consistently throughout the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	359,060
Total expenditure	335,281
Expenditure per pupil	2,540

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	34,735
Balance carried forward to next year	58,514

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Reception class is unsatisfactory and as a result, children underachieve. Standards are lower than they were at the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Useful opportunities are provided to develop children's speaking and listening skills.
- Number rhymes are well used to reinforce understanding.
- There is good liaison with the independent Pre-School on site.
- Insecure knowledge and understanding of how young children learn.
- Inappropriate organisation that follows National Curriculum guidelines rather than those for the Foundation Stage.
- Insufficient structured play activities to reinforce children's understanding.
- Assessment is based on the National Curriculum rather than the Early Learning Goals..

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for this area of learning is satisfactory. The children enter the school with average social skills. There are appropriate strategies to build these up, so that by the end of the Reception year, most of the children achieve the expected standards.

27. There is good liaison between the Reception class and the independent Pre-School on site. Some useful joint planning opportunities have been arranged and resources are shared well. Both groups examine the same topics and occasionally share visits and visitors. The good induction procedures ensure that the children are moved thoughtfully and successfully into the Reception class. They are happy to come to school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision for this area is unsatisfactory. Although pupils attain the Early Learning Goals in most aspects, their achievements are held back by a lack of appropriate practical activities to extend their learning.

28. There are some good opportunities provided to promote the children's speaking and listening skills, for example, through talking about their news or when handling a torch and battery-operated toy. However, there is a lack of suitable practical activities to support their learning. For example, children are all given the same work and are expected to write their news by copying the teacher's writing. This does not help individuals to develop the range of necessary skills at their own pace. There are also too few opportunities for children to enjoy structured play activities to reinforce their understanding of language and literacy. All this indicates an insecure knowledge and understanding of how young children learn.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision is unsatisfactory. Although children attain the expected standards by the end of Reception, the range of experiences they receive is too narrow.

29. Activities that are planned to support the children's learning, for example, about measurement are inappropriate and do not match the needs and age of the children. For example, children were expected to cut a piece of paper that was longer than one given to them. However, the children just cut paper any size because the concept and activity was not appropriate for this

age group. Number songs and rhymes are nonetheless used well to support the children's learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

30. There was insufficient time to fully inspect this area of learning, or to make judgements on standards by the end of Reception. However, what was seen was unsatisfactory. In the lesson observed, both the planning and the activity undertaken were too advanced for children of this age. For example, they were expected to talk about battery or electrically operated toys, handle just two objects, and then to sit at the table and fill in a work sheet.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

31. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards, teaching and learning. Examination of the timetable shows planned opportunities to develop children's physical skills although building work in progress limits children's daily access to outdoor play.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

32. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards, teaching and learning. However, art and design and music have been identified as areas for improvement. There was none of the children's artwork on display in the classroom.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory in Years 1 to 3** and **good in Years 4 to 6**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed through discussions and role-play.
- Pupils' reading is developed soundly and most pupils attain levels in line with the national expectations.
- Although pupils develop their writing skills well in history, this is not evident in other subjects.
- Pupils' basic writing skills are not well developed by Year 2.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to help pupils learn to draft and develop their writing.
- Marking does not reflect how pupils are either moving towards, or failing to meet, their target.
- The impact of the co-ordinator has been limited by a lack of time and opportunity to observe lessons and discuss planning with colleagues.

Commentary

33. Pupils' achievements have been maintained at a satisfactory level since the last inspection. Year 6 test results were below average in 2002 but there were a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Current Year 6 pupils speak well and achieve satisfactory levels in reading and writing. The majority of pupils express real interest in reading and regularly use books for research as well as reading for pleasure. The number of boys attaining Level 5 in writing was below average in 2003 and improvements have been implemented effectively. Teachers are using history topics as the subject matter in extended writing, and this has increased boys' interest and achievement.
34. Teaching and learning is good overall. Very lively and well-planned teaching in Years 5 and 6 stimulates pupils' achievements well and their progress is good. Similarly, pupils in Years 4 and 5 respond with enthusiasm to the good questioning of their class teacher who challenges

them to explain their ideas and express them clearly, for example by asking: “*Who do you think our visitors are today?*” and “*Why do you think that?*” Pupils in both classes demonstrate initiative and enjoyment in taking on responsibilities and completing challenging tasks set for them. Pupils in Year 6 maintain high standards in writing, publishing and marketing a termly newspaper called ‘*The Willow Warbler*’.

35. Since the last inspection, Year 2 test results in reading and writing have matched or exceeded the national average in four years out of five. Current pupils read with interest and expression and enjoy talking about the books they like. Standards in reading have been improved through better guided reading activities and clearer assessment. Recent test results in writing indicate that pupils are not acquiring a firm grasp of sentencing, punctuation and spelling. Pupils with special educational needs are given a good level of support and progress well. Similarly, more able pupils are well challenged by imaginative tasks which help them to apply their writing skills in history and geography.
36. Staff monitor pupils’ progress well through a good system of tests and assessments. This has identified the need to promote boys’ reading and writing, and improvements have been implemented which are already evident. However at Year 2, the standard of the work set in writing is sometimes too demanding for pupils of average ability. As a result, they struggle with advanced vocabulary which they love to say but which they cannot spell.
37. The school has recently started to analyse its results with more rigour but the impact of this has not worked through sufficiently into all aspects of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has been effective in developing staff skills. However, she has not had opportunities to observe lessons and ensure that teachers are maintaining the correct focus on pupils’ writing skills. Teachers have begun to set targets to help pupils improve their work but the way these are presented to pupils is not always effective. Teachers do not remind pupils to think about their targets in class nor do teachers regularly refer to them in marking pupils’ work.
38. Pupils’ achievement is good in speaking and listening in all classes. Teachers organise good opportunities for pupils to ask questions, to discuss ideas in groups and to present their work to the class at the end of lessons. The use of drama and role-play is good, with teachers leading sessions in role as one of the characters and asking pupils to assume a role in their speaking and writing. This, and annual plays which include the whole school, have a positive impact on pupils’ confidence, their speaking and listening skills and promotes good relations among pupils and with staff.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

39. Good examples of literacy development were seen in pupils’ writing on history at both Key stages. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to speak confidently and accurately and demonstrate a willingness to express themselves in discussion. In mathematics, pupils are encouraged to use precise terms well and vocabulary is displayed to help them. In science, pupils’ language skills are not well developed by dictated notes and excessive use of worksheets.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching with very good emphasis on improving pupils’ problem-solving skills.
- Pupils’ positive attitudes to work and their very careful presentation.
- The school’s good analysis of test results which helps to pinpoint areas for development.
- Not enough time for the subject leader to observe lessons.

- Marking does not ensure that pupils know what they should do to improve their work.

Commentary

40. Standards in Year 6 are in line with the national average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. They have been maintained since the last inspection, although there was a drop in the 2002 test results. Pupils' test results were stronger in 2003, although the number achieving Level 5 was lower than the national average.
41. Results of the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002 show that they attain above the national average, and standards are high when compared to similar schools. This picture changes from year to year because of the small cohort of pupils, and results in 2003 were slightly lower. Pupils' achievements are sound however, when compared to their skills on entry to the school. At present, pupils are attaining levels in line with national expectations.
42. All of the teaching seen was good or better, with two out of the three lessons being very good. The very good teaching in the upper two classes has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and they achieve well. Pupils are provided with worthwhile opportunities that stimulate and clearly motivate them. For example, pupils in Year 5/6 were totally involved in a calculation which involved spending one million pounds. Two higher-attaining pupils were clearly challenged by the activity, which was noticeable by their systematic approach to the problem. In the scrutiny of pupils' past work, particularly in Year 6, the pupils make a positive response to the high expectations of the teacher in their neat and effectively organised work. In Year 1/2, pupils have good opportunities to consolidate their learning about money, for example, by handling coins, playing money games and using a coin recognition programme on the computer.
43. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has done much to analyse the test results and this has been effectively used by teachers to guide their planning of lessons. It has identified the need to introduce more problem-solving activities to raise standards, and to challenge higher-attaining pupils in order to gain a higher level in their national tests at the end of Year 6. Close links with the local secondary school have enabled pupils to extend their skills in the use of ICT and calculators. In their marking of pupils' work, teachers do not provide enough pointers on how pupils can improve. Assessing pupils' work has been correctly identified as an area of development for the teachers. The monitoring of lessons by the subject leader is under-developed.

Use of mathematics across the curriculum

44. This is sound but in need of further development. There was good use of number in Year 5 and 6 science, including development of pupils' measuring skills. There was some use of information and communication technology to record findings, but this was not well developed to show pupils how effectively computers display data.

SCIENCE

Overall provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good results in Year 6 national tests in 2003.
- Insufficient opportunities for investigative work in Year 2.
- Insufficient use of assessment data to match tasks to the range of ages and abilities, particularly in the Year 1 / 2 class.
- Insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Shortcomings in both the quality of marking and ongoing assessment.

Commentary

45. Year 6 test results in 2002 were below average but results in 2003 significantly improved. This was partly the result of an over-emphasis on preparation for the tests during the spring term, at the expense of in-depth coverage of the curriculum. Current pupils are achieving levels in line with those expected, and teaching offers older pupils a better range of investigative activities.
46. In Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactory levels. Under guidance, they carry out investigations well but teaching uses only a limited range of strategies to help pupils record their discoveries. There is a heavy reliance on structured tasks and copywriting, which does not develop pupils' writing skills or reinforce their understanding of concepts.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall. Pupils are enthusiastic and respond well to opportunities for practical work. Lower-attaining pupils are given full access to the curriculum through additional high-quality adult support. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress are satisfactory but the data are not fully used to inform the planning of lessons. The quality of day-to-day marking is unsatisfactory and does not analyse how well individual pupils are learning and what they need to do to improve.
48. There is insufficient monitoring by the co-ordinator of science provision, either through lesson observations or through work sampling. While long- and medium-term planning is satisfactory, there is not enough monitoring to ensure that this is turned into a range of tasks properly matched to the learning needs of individual pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Mains strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils underachieve by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils make satisfactory use of computers to aid their learning in mathematics.
- Poor management does not ensure that all aspects of the subject are taught in sufficient depth and older pupils do not learn well.
- Pupils do not use computers widely enough for word-processing.

Commentary

49. At a time when pupils' attainment in this subject has risen nationally, the school has not extended pupils' learning and their achievements have declined since the last inspection. Training has helped raise teachers' competence and confidence but due to illness the subject currently lacks leadership and is poorly managed.
50. Pupils in Year 6 use encyclopaedia to aid their research in history and geography but they have only a basic understanding of how to search for information. They make only limited use of computers for drafting and presenting their written work although by the end of the year, they do learn how to prepare a multi-media presentation. Pupils had no access to the Internet during the inspection as cables had been disconnected during rebuilding work. Nonetheless, pupils have only limited experience of communicating through email and much of their research activities are carried out at home. The school has no resources with which to teach control technology at the moment, which means pupils are not receiving the instruction specified in the National Curriculum. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how a computer can aid their learning but do not have enough opportunities to put this into practice.

51. In Year 2, pupils have sound keyboard skills and understand how to open programmes, print and save their work. Nonetheless, pupils are still at an early stage of writing directly onto computers and have only a limited knowledge of how to use graphics and clip art to illustrate their work. Pupils regularly use computers to extend their learning in mathematics and find information in history and geography from computer-based resources. They control floor robots and understand how to plan and key-in commands. Pupils have a limited idea of how computers are used in everyday life.
52. Where pupils are instructed about using computers, teaching is sound, well presented and indicates that staff have a satisfactory level of competence in the subject. Classroom assistants who supervise computer sessions are knowledgeable and provide pupils with clear guidance on what to do. The computers in Years 1 and 2 are sufficient for pupils' learning and teachers plan a balanced programme of learning which will ensure standards rise. However, at Key Stage 2, there is a shortage of computers as well as resources for emailing and control technology in order that pupils learn all that is expected by Year 6.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. This is unsatisfactory by Year 2 and poor by Year 6.

HUMANITIES

In humanities, work was sampled. Three **history** lessons were observed but no **geography** lessons took place during the inspection. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.

54. Leadership and management of these subjects are jointly managed and good, promoting satisfactory achievement among pupils both by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' knowledge and interest in history were good in the lessons seen. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils extend their learning in one subject by linked studies in the other. Pupils benefit from the study of local geography which complements their study of local history. They have a better understanding of World locations as a result of their study of Tudor exploration. In their work on Florence Nightingale, Year 2 pupils identify where the Crimea is on a globe.
55. Teaching is exciting in its use of role-play, visits and visitors, to enliven pupils' understanding of the historical periods studied. Pupils were keen to describe what they had seen and learnt from a day at Kentwell Hall and could explain accurately why primary sources of information were important. Year 2 pupils enthusiastically questioned their teacher playing the role of Florence Nightingale, to test out their learning and understanding of the period. In both these lessons, pupils showed good levels of speaking and writing skills stimulated by the way good teaching fired their imagination. Pupils vividly recalled the visit of an ex-pupil who had described his life at school during the war, and in considering the conditions of Tudor sailors, Year 5 pupils responded to their class teacher's portrayal as Francis Drake.
56. In both history and geography, ICT is well used as a resource for research and pupils actively search for information from CD-ROMs. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils respond well to tasks which they have to organise themselves. Teachers are good at setting pupils activities which require them to allocate responsibilities, plan and complete a task in a set time and report back to the class with their findings. Pupils describe these assignments as stimulating and good learning experiences.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for this subject **is satisfactory**.

57. Not enough evidence is available to judge the standards at the end of Year 2, or the overall quality of teaching and learning across the school as no lesson was observed in Year 1/2 and

only one lesson was observed in Year 4/5. However, from the evidence available in the scrutiny of pupils' past work in Year 5/6 and a small amount of work in Year 1/2, and discussion with the subject leader, there is satisfactory provision and an appropriate variety of work presented. This is a different judgement from that at the last inspection, when standards exceeded expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses are

- There is a lack of appropriate resources for other world faiths.
- There is a lack of multicultural books in the school.

Commentary

58. The lack of resources was identified at the last inspection and the school compensates for this through use of a County resource centre. However, there are too few story or reference books in the library on multicultural issues.
59. The scrutiny of pupils' past work recorded in Year 6 shows that standards are in line with the local programme of study in Suffolk schools. This judgement is also reflected in the one lesson observed in Year 4/5. In this lesson, the quality of teaching was very good and had a positive impact on the pupils' learning by promoting their thinking skills through, for example, the effective use of a problem-solving situation, such as 'Do we expect the same behaviour from everyone?' One of the explanations after profitable discussion was, "...It could depend on their age or personality or their beliefs..."

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Two lessons of **art and design** and one of **design and technology** were observed. A sample of pupils' work from the previous year was also examined but does not provide enough evidence to make secure judgements about pupils' achievements. No lessons of **music** took place during the inspection and no judgements can be made on standards or provision.

60. In **art and design**, observations of pupils' work and two lessons, indicate that provision is sound and gives pupils a balanced curriculum across all the expected areas of learning. Standards in Year 6 are average. Teaching stimulates pupils' observations and their good use of different media such as paint, pastel and pencil.
61. In the one lesson seen in **design and technology** in Year 1/2, the teaching was satisfactory and the pupils worked at average standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The provision for this subject **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching promotes a positive attitude among pupils and above average attainment.
- A knowledgeable and skilful subject leader.
- A very wide range of additional activities for sport is provided outside the school day.
- Swimming is available for the whole school throughout the year on a rota basis.
- The positive response of the pupils.
- Not enough opportunities for pupils to critically evaluate their work and make suggestions about the work of others.

Commentary

62. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards in gymnastics, dance and games across the school. Two lessons were observed in the upper two classes of the school, one in games and the other in dance, and in these, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. No lessons were observed in Year 1/2. Therefore, no overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning at the end of Year 2. Standards in swimming meet the requirement for pupils to be able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
63. The school provides a good curriculum, which is enhanced by being effectively involved in additional sporting activities outside the school day and by using some of the facilities of the local High School. In a good games lesson in Year 5/6, the teacher's pleasant and encouraging manner resulted in a positive response from the pupils, who enjoyed working together as teams in order to score a goal in Unihoc. The good teaching made certain that ground rules were established and reinforced throughout the lesson to ensure the safe use of the equipment. However, there were few opportunities for pupils to critically evaluate and appraise either their own or the work of their classmates.
64. Positive encouragement promotes the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. This ensures that they sustain concentration and behave well in lessons; this was a feature of both of the lessons observed. In the very good dance lesson in Year 4/5, the pupils were well motivated and stimulated in their response in, for example, creating dance sequences to Tudor music. Specific warm-up activities ensured that, as one pupil said, *"We warm up our muscles because when we exercise we won't do any damage."* The skill of the subject leader ensured that the pupils had opportunities to talk about what they had seen as an audience.
65. There are very good links with the community. For example, the school successfully participates with other schools in tournaments in swimming and sports. Specialist coaching groups come into the school to effectively build up the pupils' skills in football, cricket and rugby, together with Dance Theatre groups.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

