

INSPECTION REPORT

**BARDWELL CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Bardwell

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124687

Headteacher: Mrs. Julia Wells

Lead inspector: Dr. Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 266595

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First School
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4-9
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 62

School address: School Lane
Bardwell
Bury St Edmunds
Postcode: Suffolk
IP31 1AD

Telephone number: 01359 250854
Fax number: 01359 250854

e-mail: ht.bardwell.p@talk21.com

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Canon Philip Oliver

Date of previous inspection: 19th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a rural area and is much smaller than most first schools. The current headteacher has been in post for just over a year. The school serves the village but a substantial proportion of pupils live in the surrounding district with some travelling quite a distance to school each day. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are average but the number of pupils claiming free school meals is below average. All but one of the pupils are from white British backgrounds. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school between Years 1 and 4. The standards of pupils who enter the school are above average overall. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below average and fewer than usual have statements of special educational needs. The majority of pupils with special needs have moderate learning difficulties, or difficulties in speech and communication. The school gained a School Achievement award in 2003. It works closely with the other primary school in the area.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2711	Dr. Alan Jarvis	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage; science; information and communication technology (ICT); design and technology.
1234	Daljit Singh	Lay inspector	
18630	Cecelia Davis	Team inspector	English; mathematics; religious education; art and design; special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school where there is a good climate for learning. Pupils flourish because they are well cared for and taught well. They benefit from a rounded education and are expected to work hard. Strengths far outweigh any weaknesses. Staff and governors are working well together to further improve provision and standards. The headteacher has provided a strong spur to developments. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, and these high standards are built upon and sustained to the end of Year 4.
- Pupils settle very well into the reception class and the strong focus on reading and learning joined-up handwriting from the very start pays great dividends later on.
- Too little use is made of ICT across the curriculum.
- Very good links have been forged with parents, who mostly strongly support the school.
- The monitoring of performance by subject leaders and the governing body, although improving, is not yet rigorous enough.
- The very good uptake of out-of-school activities enriches pupils' enjoyment of school life.
- Pupils are insufficiently involved in assessing their own work.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection, with a number key improvements being made in the last year. Standards are improving faster than those nationally. However, there is still some way to go before standards are regularly in the top five per cent of schools. The presentation of pupils' work, an issue at the last inspection, is now much improved. Longstanding weaknesses in accommodation have been rectified but the need for a better staffroom remains. Insufficient use is still made of ICT across the curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

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

A means that results were in the top five per cent in the country.*

Care is need in interpreting the data because of the small number of pupils in each year group.

Achievement is good overall. Children do well in the reception class, where standards are securely above average in relation to the goals they are expected to reach by the start of Year 1. Standards have been consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics in the national tests taken at the end of Year 2. These show that pupils are approximately two terms ahead of their peers in other schools. Occasionally, standards in a subject have been in

the top five per cent of schools, as they were in mathematics in 2002. In addition, although starting from a higher point than normal, pupils do well in relation to similar schools. Standards in the current Year 2 are also well above average in these areas and also in science. In Year 4, standards are sustained at well above average levels in English, mathematics and science, and are above average in religious education. Pupils achieve well regardless of their gender, level of attainment or special educational needs.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. Spiritual and moral development is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good although a few pupils do not consistently behave well or take account of the needs of others. Attendance is above average even though a few parents take their children on holiday or to social events during term time, counter to the wishes of the headteacher.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided, including the teaching and the curriculum, is good.

Teaching is very good in the Year 3/4 class and in science throughout the school. Lessons contain challenging tasks for pupils of different levels of ability and ages, which enables all groups of pupils to make good gains in their learning. Good quality resources and well-deployed teaching assistants help promote good learning but computers are not used enough. Pupils are insufficiently involved in assessing their own work. The clear marking policy is inconsistently applied. The inattentiveness of a few pupils sometimes disrupts the learning of others, although teachers mostly do their very best to counteract this.

A good curriculum enables most pupils to achieve well. This is enriched by a very good range of popular and well-attended clubs and other enrichment activities. There are particularly strong links between literacy and other subjects but the connections with ICT are much weaker. The small numbers of pupils with a special educational need are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum, as are those who have a special gift or talent. The school is well staffed, effectively resourced and benefits from good accommodation. As yet there is no school council as the school is seeking out the best way to involve pupils in its development. Parents are consulted about improvements, many help in school and they are kept very well informed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a very strong sense of direction and clear strategic thinking. She has established effective teamwork and a good capacity to improve further. Subject leaders have good action plans for their subjects but need to further strengthen some aspects of their management. The governance of the school is satisfactory although some minor statutory requirements are not met. A number of governors support the school well, especially in finance, ICT, premises and pastoral matters, but need to bring more rigour to their monitoring work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school's work. They particularly like the family atmosphere and the approachability of all staff. Most pupils like the school. However, they say a few pupils do not behave well and teachers could show them how to make their work better. The inspection team agrees.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Strengthen the use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Further develop the monitoring roles of the governors and subject leaders.
- Develop the pupils' understanding of how to make their work better.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the required information is given in the annual report to parents and prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

The standards judgement compares standards in the school to standards nationally. Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average at the end of Year 2. These high levels are sustained through Years 3 and 4. Pupils achieve well regardless of their gender, level of attainment or special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently well above average because of good teaching and the kick start given to these areas in the reception class.
- Pupils become very fluent readers by the end of Year 4.
- Handwriting and presentation of work are good and have improved since the last inspection.
- There are examples of standards being above average in art and design and design and technology.

Commentary

1. Children start in the reception class with standards that approach above average levels. By the time they start Year 1 all groups of children have achieved well and standards are securely above average, especially in reading, writing, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development. This is because they are taught consistently well and receive good parental support at home. Good reading habits, learning letter sounds and the teaching of joined-up handwriting are encouraged from their very first days in school.

The table shown below gives average point scores for pupils. Each level in the National Curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9 (18.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.6 (16.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.0 (19.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement from the above average standards on entry. Care has to be taken in considering the significance of the point scores as the

results of one pupil can have a marked effect on the score where small numbers are involved. However, results over recent years have been consistently good. There is a two-point advantage between the school's results and those nationally. This shows that pupils are on average two terms ahead of their peers in other schools in reading, writing and mathematics.

3. Well above average standards have been sustained in the 2004 tests (where the results are as yet unvalidated). This year group contained a pupil with special educational needs and although the pupil achieved well, their result lowered the overall point score a little. Over recent years standards have been improving at a faster rate than those nationally. They have been approaching the performance of the top five per cent of all schools, but are not yet consistently within this category. There is still a gap to be crossed before the achievement of pupils is very good. Attention given to addressing small, but still important weaknesses in boys' reading and writing are starting to pay dividends.
4. Standards seen in the current Year 2 remain well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. A key reason for this is that pupils are given challenging work that suits their age and ability. One factor holding back even higher standards is that marking does not give them good guidance on how to improve. In science a combination of very good teaching and a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry is helping good achievement. Again, higher achievement is being limited because pupils do not have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve. The presentation of work has improved considerably because there is daily handwriting practice and joined-up handwriting is started in the reception class.
5. Pupils do not take any national tests at the end of Year 4, when most are nine years old: tests for this stage of education are taken at the end of Year 6, usually in a Suffolk middle school. Standards in the current Year 4 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. The major strength in teaching in the Year 3/4 class in both English and mathematics and the good arrangements for literacy and numeracy to be used in other subjects are key factors in sustaining standards at a high level. Very good teaching in science also helps pupils to become very competent for their age in using their knowledge and understanding to plan and carry out a range of fair tests.
6. Standards and achievement could not be judged in information and communication technology (ICT). Although computers and other ICT equipment are used well in English and mathematics, insufficient use is made of ICT across the curriculum to help raise standards and promote good achievement. In other subjects, there are examples of work which are of an above average standard in art and design and design and technology.
7. There are several key reasons for the good achievement. Paramount are the good overall teaching and learning and an effective curriculum which stimulates and adds interest to pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all years because they are well supported, both in lessons and when they are withdrawn for special help. Teachers routinely plan adapted work for them to ensure they take a full part in lessons, as they do for pupils who have particular gifts and talents. Parents who responded to the questionnaires before the inspection felt their child was making good progress. Inspectors agree.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual and moral development is very good and their social and cultural development is good, making these areas of their personal development good overall. Attendance is above the national average for similar schools. Punctuality is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes attendance very well but a few parents do not support this.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral understanding is developed very well.
- Nearly all pupils are very keen to come to school and take part in all it offers.
- A few pupils do not consistently behave well as their peers.

Commentary

8. In recent years attendance had been rising. Figures in the table below show that this was well above average in 2002/03. However, during last year attendance fell slightly to an above average level. This was mainly because more parents took their children on holiday or went to other social events during term time. Registers are scrupulously maintained. A pleasing number of pupils have exemplary attendance. The headteacher and staff take all steps to encourage regular attendance. To improve existing levels the headteacher frequently reminds parents about their legal obligations and has refused permission to parents who insist on taking their children on holidays during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data:	0.0
National data	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

9. Most pupils enjoy learning and are enthusiastic in everything they do. Most are pleasant to others, eager to please and get on well with their peers. This situation was often evident in the playground, where pupils were observed playing, sharing playground equipment and building constructive relationships. These help underpin pupils' confidence and self-esteem, encouraging them to learn and assisting in their personal development. During breaks and lunchtimes, older pupils are encouraged by staff to help their younger peers. There has been a very good response to the increasing number of after-school clubs that have been introduced, and skipping is a popular lunchtime activity. All of the children seen in the reception class had settled in well and were relishing their first days at school. They are likely to achieve well in the goals expected in their personal, social and emotional development.
10. Nearly all pupils say they like being at school. However some say that there are a few pupils who do not always behave well and are occasionally unfriendly. They are also clear that there is no bullying. The inspectors agree with the pupils. The teachers are also aware that a small number of pupils can be restless, call out in lessons and do not always concentrate as hard as they might. This is in contrast the very good behaviour and attitudes to learning of most pupils but is limiting higher standards. There have been no exclusions in the past two years.

11. Pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection. A much closer partnership has been fostered with the church in the village. The headteacher and other staff provide very positive role models in developing a climate in which all pupils can grow and flourish. Very strong support is provided by the chair of governors. This has led to a strengthening of opportunities for pupils to follow the Christian celebrations during each season, helping them to develop a very good understanding of their own beliefs. Grace is said at meal times and even from an early age the pupils learn how to say their own prayers. The very good moral development has been sustained. Pupils draw up their own class rules and whenever pupils misbehave or are unsure about what they have to do, adults encourage them to think about whether they are making the right choices.

12. The school has only one pupil from an ethnic minority background, and pupils' cultural identity is mostly rooted in their local experiences. Consequently the school ensures that pupils learn about and appreciate some other cultures through the programme for personal and social development, religious education, art and design and music lessons. Pupils treat visitors from other cultures with respect. For example, during a design and technology lesson a Sikh inspector was asked about his faith and why he wears the turban. Pupils were surprised to learn he was born in Scotland and not India. The good contacts that have been built up with the local community, such as visits to senior citizens, help pupils to develop their social awareness.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and its enrichment very good. Other key strengths are the very good induction procedures and the very productive links with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons contain challenging learning tasks for pupils of different levels of ability and ages.
- Good quality resources promote effective learning but computers are not used enough.
- Pupils are insufficiently involved in assessing their own work.
- The clear and useful marking policy is inconsistently applied.
- Teaching is very good in the Year 3/4 class and science throughout the school.
- Learning is sometimes adversely affected by some children calling out or inattentiveness.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	8	6	0	0	0

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

13. Parents are very satisfied with the quality of teaching. They say that teachers expect their children to work hard and explain how they can help their children at home. The inspectors agree. Good teaching and learning is a key factor in all groups of pupils achieving well. Two thirds of the teaching seen was good or better. Teaching is consistently good in the reception class and strongest in the Year 3/4 class and in science in all years.
14. There are several reasons why pupils are interested in their work and learning is good. In the reception class, interesting activities are planned across all areas of learning and good use is made of the local grounds and village to extend learning. Teaching here is consistently good because child-initiated experiences and direct teaching are balanced well and the teacher and teaching assistant work seamlessly as a team in supporting all pupils. The children have regular access to computers and other ICT equipment such as tape recorders and cameras. In the main school, teachers have effectively implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies. The teaching and learning strategies which these have fostered, such as the clear setting of objectives at the start, a stimulating five-minute starter, pupil activity sessions and effective recap at the end of the lessons, are well embedded.
15. The small number of pupils in the school necessitates that the two classes contain pupils of different ages and abilities. This poses an additional challenge to the teachers to ensure that each pupil regularly gets work which is sufficiently demanding. This is done very well by all teachers and is a real strength of teaching. In every lesson care is taken to set activities for the lower, average and higher attaining pupils and the younger and older pupils. Appropriate support is given to pupils with special educational needs. Sometimes these pupils are placed with younger pupils, where work is pitched closer to their level of development. Similarly, a small number of gifted and talented pupils have been identified, especially in mathematics. These are taught with older pupils, where work is more challenging.
16. The very good teaching stood out, particularly that in science and the Year 3/4 class. In these lessons teaching was more stimulating than elsewhere and the activities set generally had more zip and interest. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson the pupils really enjoyed the challenge in playing a variety of interesting games; Year 3 pupils had to identify right angles and 2D shapes whilst the Year 4 pupils had to recognise equilateral triangles. Very good questioning, an expert knowledge of the curriculum and well-directed support from the teaching assistants promoted the very productive learning in small groups. Similarly, the very effective teaching in science in both classes was characterised by very well chosen activities, well-deployed teaching assistants and a very brisk pace to learning.
17. Some satisfactory lessons were seen, especially in the Year 1/2 class. To some extent these were atypical of teaching over time and the accurate monitoring of the headteacher, which shows teaching to be normally good. One contributory reason for this was the strong winds outside on the first day of the inspection, which were unsettling for the children. Nevertheless the main reasons why lessons were satisfactory rather than better were that the inattentiveness of a small number of pupils was not addressed quickly enough and the activities were sometimes not as challenging as they might be.
18. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour and the pupils respond accordingly. There is a good deal of respect, both amongst the pupils and between the pupils and other adults in the classroom. Instances of misbehaviour or inattention are often "nipped in

the bud". However, in a very small number of lessons teachers were not so effective in managing and engaging pupils who have limited concentration, or who sometimes do not behave well.

19. Assessment is satisfactory because it is used well in English and mathematics to track achievement and gives teachers a broad indication of what pupils achieve in other subjects. Some pupils felt that the teachers could do more to show them how to make their work better. The inspectors agree. Work is marked regularly and there are many examples of this in a range of subjects. Often marking is positive and supportive, giving teachers and pupils a clear idea of the overall quality of the work. However, teachers do not always identify the weaknesses in the work and pupils do not have any indication of what they need to do in order to improve. The marking guidelines on display are not consistently applied when teachers mark pupils' work. Although pupils are set targets in English and mathematics and this is working well, overall pupils are not involved regularly enough in lessons in seeing what it is they need to do next. More manageable systems of assessing in other subjects have been devised, which should go part way to addressing this issue.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and benefits from a very good range of enrichment activities. Good accommodation, staffing and resources effectively support the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high uptake of out-of-school activities considerably helps pupils' enjoyment of school.
- ICT is insufficiently used across the curriculum.
- Good quality and well-organised resources help to enhance pupils' learning.
- Teachers make good use of the good range of accommodation.

Commentary

20. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. Planning for personal, social and health education is good, with regular 'circle time' lessons. Throughout the school, eye-catching displays celebrate pupils' work, demonstrating the whole school's respect for its pupils' efforts and thereby enhancing pupils' personal development and self-esteem.
21. The accommodation has also improved, with new facilities such as an easily-accessible water supply. New resources, including better computer provision, have been purchased and these are beneficial to all pupils and have a positive impact on the standards attained. The library is accessible and stocked with a wide range of good books. New outdoor play equipment has been bought to improve outdoor facilities. Best use is made of the relatively limited Foundation Stage classroom and this is compensated for by good use of the outdoor area and school grounds. The comprehensive building development plan identifies further areas for improvement, including the need for a permanent staff room.
22. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities including French, skipping, art, orchestra and recorders. Well over half of the pupils take part in these

activities, which enrich pupils' experiences and extend their learning. Visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and links with the community enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

23. In their planning teachers recognise the different levels of attainment in their classes and set work accordingly. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and as a result their needs are well met. All pupils have equality of opportunity because of the good teamwork between adults that provides them with good support.
24. More innovation is being brought to the curriculum, building on the ideas set out in the government's 'Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy' for primary schools. Literacy in particular is already well linked with other subjects. Teachers are beginning to make good links between some subjects, for example English and religious education. This is deepening pupils' understanding and helping to develop their positive attitudes. In contrast, links between ICT and most subjects are relatively under-developed.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Pupils are provided with good support, advice and guidance and are satisfactorily involved in the school's work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures have been further strengthened and are now very good.
- Children settle into school very well.
- Better assessment information on individual pupils would help teachers provide more sharply focused support and guidance.
- As yet no school council has been established.

Commentary

25. Nearly all pupils say that there is an adult they would go to if they were worried at school. Recent high-quality training has ensured that the arrangements for child protection are fully in place. All adults are very aware of current legislation and the procedures to be adopted, should an incident arise. Very good links exist with external agencies when the need arises.
26. Teachers and support staff know each pupil very well. Daily contact with parents enables any concerns to be taken regard of during the school day. Parents say that staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and are tactful and sympathetic when dealing with any issues. In the reception class the teacher takes very good account of parental information, which enables the children to feel secure and work to be pitched well. Teachers track pupils' progress well in English and mathematics and set clear targets, and this contributes to the good achievement in these subjects. The learning and other needs of the small number of pupils with special educational needs are also clearly identified. This enables staff to provide individual support for these pupils. In other subjects the assessment information, whilst satisfactory, is not yet good enough to enable teachers to sharply focus on the needs of individual pupils. Additionally, marking could also be improved to give better guidance to pupils on areas for improvement, even though points for action are discussed in some lessons.

27. Parents strongly agree that arrangements for children starting school, either in the reception class or later on, help them settle in quickly. These include a very well written and helpful early years prospectus, information evenings for “new” parents and advice on how parents can work with teachers and support their children at home. One excellent example of practice is a book which the children in the current Year R and Year 1 class have prepared for children about to start school. This tells them the names of their teacher and other staff, what happens at lunchtime and some of the things they will do at school. Similarly very good arrangements help ensure that older pupils who join part way through the school year quickly feel at home and get the most out of school.
28. The headteacher has recognised that more should be done to involve pupils in the work and development of the school. Some of the more astute pupils would also welcome their voice to be heard in a more structured way, even though some are involved in duties around the school and helping at playtime. However, this is a small school with younger children. Wisely, before implementing anything new, the headteacher is keen to consult and explore ways in which this will work best in this type of school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a very good partnership with parents and links with the local community are good. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good levels of communication between parents and teaching staff.
- Many parents help in lessons and other events and also support the active PTA.
- There is an effective partnership with the wider community.
- There are few curriculum links with neighbouring middle schools.

Commentary

29. The school has the full confidence of its parents. The headteacher is very accessible to parents at the start and end of the school day, as are other staff. Each child is welcomed as they arrive. The headteacher mingles in the playground with parents as they bring and collect their children, making herself available to celebrate good news and achievements as well as listening and acting on any concerns. Any pressing concerns are dealt with as soon as possible. More parents are happy that any suggestions and concerns are quickly acted upon than at the last inspection. One parent who was collecting her child described the headteacher and staff as very “approachable, caring and efficient” and this was echoed by many at the meeting for parents before the inspection.
30. The headteacher provides regular newsletters, which are written in style and language appreciated by parents. Parents are kept abreast of changes in school and there are frequent opportunities for parents to acknowledge their child’s achievements, which are shared via newsletters. Pupils’ annual reports are very well written, clearly and succinctly describe the pupil’s progress and comment on his/her personal development. This is supported by information about topics taught in the classroom. This information enables parents to share in their child’s learning and supporting the teacher.

31. The very productive links with parents are also supported by a very active PTA (Parent Teacher Association) who hold various social and fund-raising activities though the year. In addition, a good number of parents come into school and help in lessons and willingly provide extra adult presence when trips are organised. Virtually all parents support their children with their homework and many have purchased a computer to give their children a kick start.
32. The school has forged effective links with the local community, who in turn see it as a focal point of the village. For example, the local church is regularly visited by the pupils and the canon is a frequent visitor in school, helping to foster the pupils' spiritual development and a sense of belonging. Events such as the summer fete and football competitions are organised throughout the school year, and visits by senior citizens play a valuable part in the pupils' social development. The local police also come into the school and promote the importance of working together as a community, as well as promoting safety and well-being.
33. The school had good links with other schools at the last inspection but these are not as good now. The main reason for this is that more parents are exercising their choice when their children move on to a middle school at age nine, preferring to send their children to a different school, a little further way, than was the case before. Although the school sends full transfer records to all schools, curriculum links with middle schools have been difficult to establish. In contrast, there are productive links with pre-school providers in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides dynamic and effective leadership. Management is also good overall. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

The following statutory requirements are not met:

- the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not cover all the things they should and some information is inaccurate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a very strong sense of direction and clear strategic thinking.
- Governors and subject leaders are not yet rigorous enough in their monitoring.
- Good plans are being implemented to improve the school in the short and longer term.
- The annual reviews of the performance of teaching staff are helping improvement.
- Finances are well managed and the school evaluates its spending carefully.

Commentary

34. The current headteacher, in post for just over a year, is leading the school well. Her dynamic leadership has helped enhance the school's capacity to improve and its already good reputation. She has focused not only on maintaining existing strengths, but has also prioritised the small number of areas that needed urgent attention. Stabilising the budget and developing leadership and management roles of the governing body and subject leaders have received most attention. Parents are very satisfied with the way in which the school is led and managed. They are particularly pleased about the calm and happy atmosphere, the approachability and helpfulness of staff, and the good all-round education that is provided.

35. Leadership is good overall. Much has been achieved in the last year and a clear drive for improvement is evident. The headteacher works extremely closely with the lead teacher. Together they have ensured that all staff in the school, both teaching and non-teaching, are valued. Consequently, staff work very well as a team and morale is high. A tangible example of the effective leadership is the release time which has been given each term to enable subject leaders to gather information and develop good action plans for their areas of responsibility. This is often not facilitated in a small school.
36. The subject leaders who were interviewed showed good leadership, with vision, clear plans and the drive to raise standards. This year a more consistent approach to their work has been developed and some features of their management have been developed well. These include the introduction of subject leader files, the development of resources, ensuring schemes of work are up to date and interviewing pupils on their views of each subject. However, their management is satisfactory, rather than good, because as yet they have not been regularly involved in observing other teachers and pupils at work in order to pinpoint weaknesses.
37. Management is also good overall. This is because the school is organised efficiently and there is a clear focus on supporting all staff in their drive to improve provision and standards. The school improvement plan is of a good quality and is based upon an accurate evaluation of needs. This is supplemented by an equally useful three-year strategic plan. Both are well informed by a range of performance data. Together they provide a clear rolling programme for action, focusing on the right issues. However, there is scope to set out precisely what needs to be done to make all aspects of provision and achievement very good.
38. Performance management of teaching staff, which is the process by which teachers' work is reviewed annually, is working well. All teachers have clear personal and professional objectives to work towards. These have been carefully thought through. Each teacher has targets which are central to the school improvement plan, and others that relate to their personal and professional needs. This year the process is being extended to non-teaching staff. Further work also needs to be done in reviewing the workloads of all staff.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	224,865	Balance from previous year	23,000
Total expenditure	233,639	Balance carried forward to the next	14,226
Expenditure per pupil	3,768		

39. Governance is satisfactory despite minor breaches in statutory requirements. A summary of the National Curriculum assessment results has been omitted from the prospectus and information about security, finances and attendance rates in the governors' annual report to parents is either omitted or inaccurate. This breach does not affect standards.
40. Governors are supportive of the school and are forging a productive working relationship with the current headteacher. Individual governors have effectively brought their skills to bear in developing spirituality, ICT, the buildings and financial control. Good steps have been taken to improve the committee structure. This is also working more smoothly.

However, their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is still growing. This limits the extent to which they can offer challenge to the staff. The information they receive comes mainly from very comprehensive information provided by the headteacher. This is starting to be supplemented by information gained by visiting the classes and discussing progress on the school improvement plan. There is room to increase the rigour and extent of their monitoring, and this is firmly in their plans.

41. The budget is tight and moderating the pace of development. A combination of a stringent budget settlement and a smaller number of pupils on roll has necessitated difficult decisions being made to avoid a deficit budget being set. Effective action has been taken to review priorities, monitor the budget much more closely and preserve staffing. A good three-year financial plan had been drawn up to aid forward planning. Consequently, the budget has been stabilised and placed on a secure footing for the future. Although slightly high at 6.3%, the contingency held is prudent when considering the impact a small change in number on roll can have and other unexpected expenditure that can arise. The principles of best value are being applied well. The school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (the reception class) is good overall. Consequently, children make a positive and confident start to school life. Standards on entry approach above average levels. Good teaching and learning ensure that by the end of the reception class all groups of children achieve well and standards are securely above average. The teacher and her teaching assistant work extremely closely and to a common ethos. Parents provide regular support and are made to feel welcome. The curriculum is also well planned and the teacher has established a good blend of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities. There are clear foci on play, one-to-one support and group activities. These provide the children with opportunities to learn effectively in a variety of ways suited to their needs and stage of development. Although the classroom is a little small, inventive use is made of the outdoor area, school grounds and village to extend the range of learning opportunities. Assessment systems are effectively in place and provide the teacher with a good understanding of how well each child is doing and progressing. The area is well led and managed. This has resulted in good improvement in achievement since the last inspection. The children seen in the reception class had only been in school for several days and were still settling in. Due account was taken of planning, records and retained work from the previous year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in this area of learning because teaching and learning are good.
- Very good links with parents contribute to the children being happy to come to school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have established clear routines that ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued and promote their social and emotional development.

Commentary

43. Children are likely to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class and reach above average standards. Even before children start in the reception class the teacher meets the parents and visits the children in the pre-school settings which many attend. In the term before they start, children are invited to an after-school tea party to meet their teacher and become familiar with their new classroom. The teacher makes herself readily available to parents at the start and end of each session to facilitate smooth communication. A notice board outside the reception class also helps keep parents informed about special events and what their children are learning each week. Reading books, writing activities and mathematical games are available to take home, which also helps cement this very strong partnership.

44. The common and caring approach from adults results in the children feeling secure and willing to participate well in all activities. At the start of every day the teacher lets the children know what they will be doing. Staff provide good role models and emphasise the

need to say “please” and “thank you”. The children are starting to know how to organise themselves. They understand that there are rules for working and playing together and have drawn up their own class rules. Most behave well, and take responsibilities when organising their play. Some are yet to learn that it is best not to call out, but rather take turns, when they are discussing things with the teacher. They walk sensibly to the hall for assembly and “gymnastic” lessons. Most children are comfortable when separating from their parents or carers at the start of the day. Any upsets are handled very well, often by the teaching assistant playing with the child before settling them in with the rest of the class. They are becoming more independent when dressing and undressing and are learning how to fold their clothes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good reading habits are developed from the first day in school.
- Children effectively learn to join their handwriting at a much earlier age than normal.
- A strong emphasis on phonics enables children to link letter sounds with the letter shapes.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are good. Consequently, children achieve well in this area of learning. A well-planned curriculum provides plentiful opportunities to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. By the end of the reception class most children comfortably exceed the expected goals and securely reach above average standards.
46. The children enjoy learning how to read. Key words are sent home from the very start and parents are actively encouraged to practise these with their children. The key words are carefully chosen so as to link in with the books that children choose to be read in class and at home. A notice board lets parents know what letter sounds and key words are being learnt each week, which aids their support. In class the children enjoyed looking at big books such as “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”, hearing the teacher read and discussing the story.
47. In many schools, children first learn to write each letter of the alphabet before learning how to join the letters together to form handwriting. A different approach is adopted in the reception class; joined up writing is encouraged from the start. This approach works well. It produces dividends later on in Years 1 and 2, where teachers can build upon the generally neat and well-presented writing rather than teach the second step of this process.
48. Many children enter the reception class speaking in a dialect which makes it hard for them to hear each sound of a word accurately. The teacher takes every opportunity to emphasise letter sounds. In a good example seen, the children demonstrated that they had already learnt the sounds of a good number of letters and knew which letters were linked to a particular sound. The more able children could already use this knowledge to write simple words such as “cat” and “sat” even though the letters were sometimes not in the right order.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because teaching, learning and the curriculum are good.
- A good range of stimulating, practical activities help all groups of children to achieve well.

Commentary

49. Children are likely to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class and reach above average standards. They enjoy mathematics and are eager to learn more. In a good direct teaching session seen, the teacher played the “behind the wall game” where the children had to guess the number that emerged as she lifted a card with the number on from behind the wall. She also used a clapping game where the children had to tell her how many claps she had made, which became more difficult as she clapped numbers near to 10. They practise writing numbers correctly; many can already count up to 5 and beyond. Good quality resources are used in activities. For example, children found out how many teddy bears were hidden in the sand, listened to number rhymes on the tape recorder, organised numbers on the washing line in the correct order and counted whilst role-playing in the home corner. They regularly play with construction kits. These help them to recognise different shapes, how they fit together, and what patterns they make when they are joined together. Good attention is given to developing mathematical language and this also helps the children to achieve well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of a combination of good teaching and learning, lively topics and stimulating activities that capture the children’s interest.
- Good use is made of the school and village environments to develop children’s understanding.
- Children develop a very strong understanding of Christianity, but also learn of other beliefs.

Commentary

50. Children are likely to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class and reach above average standards. This area of the curriculum is covered well.

51. Over the course of the year children make good use of the school grounds to find out more about living things. They are fortunate to have access to a pond, an environmental area and bird hide. The grounds abound with plants, trees, birds and animals. They listen out for sounds on a sound walk and follow the changing pattern of the seasons. Good use is also made of the village environment. For example, the children built a variety of houses located in the village using junk materials, assisted by a number of parent helpers.

52. Regular use is made of computers and other ICT equipment. Currently the children are learning how to use a mouse and keyboard accurately. The computer is in use in most lessons and later on in the year the children will learn how to give instructions to a programmable toy and make it move in various directions. Software is available to help support the development of their literacy and numeracy skills as well as for use in their creative learning. Children enjoyed using the tape recorder. Learning, however, is sometimes slowed because some of the equipment is prone to malfunction.
53. Strong links have been developed with the local church, which the children visit for different festivals during the course of the year. This helps to develop their sense of belonging as well as learning about the love of God. They say grace at meal times and actively participate in the lively and interesting assemblies. They make up their own simple prayers, such as “Dear God, Thank you for the weather”. Most days they share and discuss their feelings together about important things that have happened in their lives. Even though all children are white they treat visitors from other cultures with courtesy and respect. Children also learn about events in the calendar such as the Chinese New Year, Divali and Eid, and find out more about the beliefs of people who celebrate these festivals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

54. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning. Planning shows that during the course of the year there is a rich curriculum in this area. The children have access to large, wheeled toys. They also enjoy playing and learning how to control their body on the adventure playground. Children working in the hall were seen moving to make a variety of bridges in a gymnastic activity. Good opportunities are provided for children to use construction sets and to use a range of equipment such as scissors, paintbrushes and tools. Children exceeded the standards expected in last year’s class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

55. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning. Planning shows that during the course of the year this area is covered well. A variety of role-play areas are made available during the year. These help the children to use their imagination and play alongside others. Children have already started to build up a repertoire of favourite songs and were seen enthusiastically joining in the singing of “Five Little Monkeys”. This assisted with their development of number skills. Although they were observed early in the school year, they could readily differentiate colours and were already making simple drawings. Work from last year shows that they have plenty of opportunities to explore a range of media and materials such as weaving and painting as well as learning about some famous artists, which is usually reserved for Year 1. Children exceeded the standards expected in last year’s class.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 (YEARS 3 AND 4 ONLY)

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work is always marked but there is insufficient guidance on how pupils can improve.
- Teaching is good overall and as a result, achievement is good – standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- Assessment and record keeping are used effectively to set individual targets for improving pupils' writing.
- The school encourages reading and the enjoyment of books in a variety of ways, resulting in very good reading fluency.
- The subject is well led and co-ordinated.

Commentary

56. There are several reasons why standards are so high and have been so over the last four years. The headteacher is the co-ordinator and tracks standards with great care. She and other staff work well as a team. The staff know their pupils well. Another positive feature is the focus on developing phonic teaching systematically throughout the school and the focus on improving spelling. Daily handwriting practice and the introduction of joined-up writing from the reception class have brought about an improvement in handwriting. Presentation is now consistently good. This was a key issue at the time of the previous inspection.
57. Throughout the school, all groups of pupils achieve well. Comprehensive records are kept of pupils' progress in writing, linked to National Curriculum levels. Pupils are aware of their targets but do not consistently assess themselves against these. Their work is always marked, often with positive comments. A marking code is on display in classrooms but this is not often used so that teachers' marking does not indicate what pupils should do to improve. Pupils with special educational needs have their own targets; they also achieve well.
58. Overall, teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Good lessons are typified by teachers' brisk pace and high expectations. A good feature of the three lessons seen was the way teachers shared the learning intention at the start of each lesson. Consequently, the pupils were crystal clear about what they were expected to learn. The very carefully planned, structured lessons introduce pupils to the whole spectrum of literary experiences including stories, poems, reports and play scripts. Teachers demonstrate how pupils should structure their work and many opportunities are provided for them to develop their skills, both within and beyond the usual English lesson. Effective use is made of ICT in order to support learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 used their knowledge of different fonts and size in order to create calligrams as part of their poetry writing. In Year 1, pupils used a computer program to find rhyming words and identify initial letter sounds.
59. Pupils regularly read individually and to adults, both at home and at school. They use reading booklets in which they record the books they have read. The very strong home-school link has made parents aware of their children's progress and contributes significantly to pupils' very good reading skills. Every week, older pupils pair up with younger pupils for a time of shared reading. Pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy these opportunities to share and talk about books. High quality books are available and the library is organised well, enabling pupils to select books of interest and matched to their reading level. Pupils are less skilled in using non-fiction books.

60. The co-ordinator provides good, knowledgeable leadership for her colleagues. Through her comprehensive checks on pupils' work and through observing lessons, she has gained a good overview of standards and the strengths and areas for improvement. These are included in a detailed action plan for the subject. Good progress since the last inspection has helped to sustain and build upon high standards in all aspects of the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend and use their speaking and listening skills in other subjects. Literacy has been well developed through pupils using their writing skills in other subjects. In history, pupils present their findings about life in Ancient Greece. They write instructions for model-making and retell Bible stories. In science, pupils record results of their investigations using a good range of vocabulary for their age.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and very good in Years 3 and 4; this enables pupils to achieve well and consistently reach standards that are well above average.
- Target setting and matching pupils' work to their level of attainment are helping teachers to plan challenging work for the different ages and abilities in their classes.
- The strong emphasis placed on different ways of carrying out calculations contributes to the good improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils working independently and not closely supervised by an adult sometimes lose concentration.

Commentary

62. The results attained in the 2003 tests taken by Year 2 pupils were well above the national average and well above those found in similar schools. These high standards have been consistent over the last four years. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working at levels above those found nationally and by the end of the year it is likely that they will make significant progress and reach well above average standards. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards are well above those expected for their age. This is very good improvement since the last inspection, where standards for both age groups were average.

63. There are several reasons why standards have improved. The strong and appropriate focus on using number squares and blank number lines to aid calculations has improved pupils' skills. In most lessons, plentiful discussion about suitable strategies takes place which stimulates learning. Thorough assessment procedures are in place and pupils' progress is tracked closely. Pupils are set targets and for the younger pupils, these are written on arrows and attached to the book so that they know what they have to learn. However, the school marking policy is inconsistently applied.

64. Number skills develop well. Throughout the school pupils are confident when carrying out calculations in their head. Pupils in Year 2 explain how they use a blank number line to

add numbers. They enjoy their lessons, responding well to the challenging activities and imaginative ways in which the teacher presents work to them.

65. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. In the very good lesson seen in the Year 3/4 class, the teacher set high expectations and provided work to challenge pupils of all abilities. A positive working environment was created and insistence on high standards of work and behaviour at all times meant that no learning time was wasted. The teacher and teaching assistant work very effectively as a team so that pupils learn more effectively. A little teaching for younger pupils was satisfactory, rather than good, because class routines were not yet well established and pupils did not concentrate when working independently. Teachers use whiteboards very well to involve pupils and let them show answers. Tasks are interesting and varied; for example, looking for right angles in and outside the school. Teachers use ICT well to practise and consolidate mathematical understanding. Computers are an integral part of most lessons and are used effectively to support learning.
66. The subject is well led and managed, which has brought about good improvement since the last inspection. By closely monitoring the provision, the co-ordinator has managed to highlight areas for improvement and taken action.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Numeracy has been satisfactorily developed across the curriculum. Teachers are increasingly identifying areas where other subjects can contribute to learning in mathematics, such as graphs in science and symmetry in art and design.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and consistently provides challenge to all groups and ages of pupils.
- The subject is well resourced and good use is made of the local environment.
- Good links have been established with literacy but not enough use is made of computers.
- The subject is well led but there is insufficient monitoring of learning at first hand.
- The information gained through assessment, including marking, is not detailed enough to help identify targets for individual pupils.

Commentary

68. Good progress has been made since the last inspection to sustain the good achievement and ensure standards remain well above average. This is because there is a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry, good curriculum coverage and new requirements are implemented as the need arises. Pupils in all years have a very well developed understanding of the factual elements of science and the ability to carry out and make sense of their investigations.

69. There are several reasons why teaching and learning are very good. Teachers make sure that the topics they teach are planned down to the smallest detail so that the activities are really interesting for the pupils to undertake. Good resources are used that have the maximum impact on pupils' learning. For example, in an excellent introduction to a lesson involving Year 1 and 2 pupils the teacher whetted the pupils' imagination and said, "I wonder if I can keep my hot drink in this bottle made out of chocolate". The resulting observations and excited reactions of the pupils showed that the point was very clearly made to them that chocolate was not a very good material at all. Pupils work very productively in lessons, especially when collaborating in group work, because work is planned to suit the different abilities and ages in each class. For example, the Years 3 and 4 pupils had to compare the properties of different materials. The teacher very skilfully organised this so that challenging but different work on the same idea was given to the younger and the older pupils and the higher and lower attaining pupils. Pupils say they enjoy their science work although a few pupils are occasionally inattentive.
70. There are plentiful examples of literacy being consistently emphasised in lessons and contributing to the high standards. The important vocabulary in each topic is on display. In both classrooms this shows a richness and diversity that encourages high quality discussion and writing. This is reinforced in lessons, where the meanings and nuances of the different words are clarified, such as the different meanings of the word "material". Neat and accurate writing and good presentation are the norm and pupils are challenged to write perceptively. Pupils are provided with various suggestions for the areas they could write about and different formats are given so as to challenge pupils at different stages of learning.
71. Not enough use is made of ICT in learning. Although there are some examples where ICT is used to help support standards, opportunities are missed to ensure this has a major impact on pupils' achievement. Over the course of the year pupils sometimes access the Internet to research a topic and collect information to put in a database, and in one lesson seen they used a camera to record the materials they could find around the school and outside.
72. One reason why achievement is not yet very good is that the information gathered from assessment does not yet sharply focus on how well all pupils are doing or regularly involve them in thinking about what they need to do to improve. The assessments that are made have been reviewed and a more manageable system has been put in place to make this more possible. Learning targets are not set. Marking is regularly undertaken, but whilst this gives support and praise there are few comments that help to pinpoint improvements.
73. The subject is led well and the subject leader has a clear and ambitious plan of action to further improve provision and standards. Much has been done in the past year to review how the subject is led and managed and improve the co-ordination of the subject. Good quality information is now contained in the subject leader's file. However, no direct observations of learning in lessons currently take place, although there are firm plans to implement this. In addition, closer attention needs to be paid to pupils' work so that any weaknesses can quickly be rectified. For these reasons management is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Information and communication technology (ICT) was sampled.

74. It was not possible to observe any teaching of ICT as a discrete subject during the inspection. This is because teaching of ICT is organised in packets during the year, in which pupils are taught specific skills which are then utilised in other subjects. Therefore it was not possible to make comprehensive judgements about standards, teaching and the quality of provision.
75. Planning shows that this arrangement ensures that statutory requirements are met. Each pupil is provided with work that suits their level of attainment and stage of ICT development. For most of the time since the last inspection the number of computers in the school has been below average and some fall below current, good specifications. However, a major investment has been made in the last year in computers and software. The pupils are poised to benefit considerably from this. Comprehensive and good quality schemes of work have been developed. The subject leader has a clear action plan and is aware of the need to monitor much more closely the use of ICT and pupils' achievement. Very good governor support has helped to improve provision.

ICT across the curriculum

76. Insufficient use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Not enough progress has been made to remedy this important weakness, which was identified as needing attention at the last inspection. Pupils say that they enjoy ICT and many have a computer at home, which aids their ICT competence. In school, they make most use of computers in their English and mathematics lessons and can quote examples in some other subjects. Very good work was seen from the Year 3/4 class, where pupils who had used a camcorder to video each other's school memories before putting the shots together to make a well-produced DVD.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. Work in history and geography was not inspected.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the requirements of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Year 2 and Year 4. This represents a good improvement on the previous inspection.
- The detailed scheme of work provides good support to staff, helping them to plan interesting activities for pupils.
- The subject is well led but the monitoring of provision is not rigorous enough.

Commentary

77. Standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are above the level expected by the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus because teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge that is conveyed sensitively to pupils. Throughout the school, an emphasis is placed on developing the pupils' oral skills. For example, in a Year 3/4 class, pupils were encouraged to ask and answer questions about themselves as part of a topic about

friends and family. Pupils showed they were keen to express their opinions as well as thinking and reflecting about their answers.

78. Pupils are kept involved throughout lessons because teachers follow the detailed scheme of work that suggests stimulating activities. These motivate pupils because there are good opportunities for teachers to use different teaching styles and ways of recording work. Pupils are enthusiastic and achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to express their religious ideas in writing, which provides them with good opportunities to use skills learnt in English lessons. The scheme has assessments built into each topic; more manageable ways of recording and using these to raise standards have recently been introduced.
79. Throughout the school, pupils are developing a good understanding of Christianity. Their written work is well presented. Older pupils understand why the Bible is important to the Christian community and what is meant by being a Christian. Visits to the local church and St Edmundsbury Cathedral, together with regular visits to school by local clergy, have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Artefacts and other resources representing different world faiths ensure that pupils' knowledge is developing. Younger pupils are familiar with stories that are important to Jewish and Hindu families.
80. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and promotes religious education effectively across all years. However, there needs to be more reflection on how each teacher delivers the subject and how standards can be further strengthened. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect in a calm, spiritual atmosphere. The headteacher reinforces the content of religious education lessons through her well planned and delivered assemblies.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No subject was inspected in full. Work was sampled in art and design and design and technology, but music and physical education were not inspected.

81. **Art and design** has a high profile across the school. The exciting range of good quality work - for example, vibrant Indian-style pictures - immediately attracts the eye of visitors. This contributes very positively to the good ethos of the school. Pupils use a wide range of media and the work of artists such as Anthony Frost and Andy Goldsworthy is used as a stimulus for pupils' work. Sketchbooks in Years 3 and 4 and ideas books for younger pupils provide very good opportunities for them to practise skills and plan designs. ICT is beginning to be used to support pupils' learning. Art is well used to support learning in other subjects. For example, older pupils made clay pots as part of an Ancient Greek topic in history. Year 2 pupils produced mobiles using 3D shapes after observing the candelabra during a visit to the church. Pupils enjoy their work, with almost half of them staying after school to participate in a weekly art club. The subject is well led.
82. Although it was not possible to judge overall standards in **design and technology** the standard of some work seen was above average. There is a clear focus on developing the designing and making process and a range of activities are used to promote this. Good learning was seen in a lesson in which the pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked enthusiastically to design and make their own "Come to the party" invitations, with pupils being effectively supported in their work by the teacher and teaching assistant. Since the last inspection resources have improved and a more manageable system of assessing pupils' work has been developed. However, there is insufficient use of ICT and monitoring

and moderating the work of pupils across all years. The subject is well led with a clear plan of action.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social, health education and citizenship was sampled.

83. Planning for personal, social and health education is good. The caring ethos of the school supports pupils' personal development and the teachers use 'circle time' to share feelings and discuss certain topics. This term there is a good focus on developing pupils' emotional health and well-being.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

