

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BRISLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Dereham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121109

Headteacher: Mrs J Boyden

Lead inspector: John Messer

Dates of inspection: 4 - 6 October 2004

Inspection number: 266489

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 4 -11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 78

School address: School Road  
Brisley  
Dereham  
Norfolk  
Postcode: NR20 5LH

Telephone number: 01362 668350  
Fax number: 01362 668648

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr David Steele

Date of previous inspection: 01/03/1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This village primary school has 70 full-time pupils on roll and a further 8 part-time children in the reception year who attend for just the morning sessions. The school is much smaller than other primary schools. The school has three classes and most pupils come from the village and the surrounding area although a high proportion, nearly a third, comes from further afield through parental choice. Nearly all pupils are from white English speaking families; there are several pupils from Holland who speak Dutch but who are also fluent in English. Four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Most pupils come from broadly average socio-economic backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the school is generally below average but there is a very wide range of ability in each year group. The proportion of full-time pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, 15 per cent, is broadly in line with the national average. However, the proportion who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, because they have more serious learning difficulties, is above the national average and last year was well above. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is now much higher than at the time of the last inspection. Most of these have moderate learning difficulties. An above average proportion of pupils enters and leave the school partway through this phase of their education, especially in Years 3 to 6. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2000 in recognition of improved national test results for pupils in Year 6.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, French, English as an additional language.
9561	Husain Aktar	Lay inspector	
23385	Suzanne Gerred	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, history, geography, music, physical education, special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>35</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that provides an effective education for its pupils. The curriculum is broad and well balanced. Teaching is good and as a result pupils achieve well. Pupils are very well behaved and have very good attitudes to learning. The leadership and management of the school are good and the governing body provides constructive support. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good and by the end of Year 6 most attain standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils enjoy reading, have a good knowledge of children's literature and attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good and teachers encourage a business-like approach to learning so that pupils tackle their work seriously and with enthusiasm.
- The ethos of the school is very good; relationships are excellent and strongly promote pupils' happiness and well-being.
- The school is very good at providing for pupils' widely varying learning needs and at nurturing individuals, especially those who are insecure or who are newcomers to the school.
- The pupils' very good behaviour and their very positive attitudes to work help them to learn effectively.
- There is scope for further improvement in the role of subject leaders, especially in the monitoring of pupils' achievement and the setting of challenging targets.
- Teachers do not always ensure that classroom assistants use their time effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Resources to support teaching and learning for children in the reception class and for information and communication technology (ICT) across the school are inadequate, and the library has too few non-fiction books for pupils to develop research skills.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has successfully tackled most of the issues raised in the last inspection report. Overall the standards that pupils attain are significantly higher than reported at the time of the last inspection, including standards in ICT, which was an area of weakness. School development planning is much better than it was and management responsibilities have been allocated appropriately. Good performance management systems have been introduced. The quality of teaching has improved markedly. Lesson planning has improved and is based on a detailed set of curricular plans that promote full coverage of the National Curriculum.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004

English	E	D	A	B
mathematics	D	D	B	C
science	A	E	A	A

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

Pupils' **achievement** is **good** overall. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and most are likely to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who speak Dutch at home and the more able pupils, achieve well. The school's performance in national tests varies widely from year to year and reflects the wide variations in the characteristics of each year group. Great caution is needed when interpreting the comparative data because the very small number of pupils involved means that a single pupil can have a substantial effect on the school's overall grading. Also the proportion of pupils with special educational needs varies from year to year. Pupils currently in Year 2 are likely to attain standards that are above average in reading and mathematics by the end of the year, and average in writing, science and ICT. By the end of Year 6 pupils are likely to attain standards that are above average in writing, mathematics and science, well above average in reading and average in ICT

**Pupils' personal qualities** are **very good**; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They have very good attitudes to their work and have high levels of self-confidence and maturity. Behaviour is very good. Relationships are excellent pupils work and play happily together. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good quality of education**. The quality of **teaching** and learning is **good**. The teaching seen in lessons for children in reception was good. It was good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. It was good, often very good and sometimes excellent in Years 3 to 6. Teachers work hard to provide a good quality of education and to promote effective learning for all pupils. Pupils' very positive attitudes to work, and their very good behaviour, support their learning well. Classroom assistants generally make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning but in some classes they are not as effective as they might be if given greater direction. The good quality of care and guidance help to foster self-esteem and confidence, which contribute to pupils' successful learning. Accommodation is satisfactory but the level of resources is inadequate in the reception class and in ICT and this constrains learning in these areas of the curriculum.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The **leadership and management** of the school are **good**. The headteacher's effective leadership helps to ensure that the school runs efficiently. There is a strong sense of teamwork and a commitment to continuing improvement and raising standards. The governing body is effective and gives good support, ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. Finances are managed well and are directed towards the most important areas of priority. Responsibility for managing the curriculum has been delegated appropriately but the school has identified the need to further develop the role of subject leaders. Several have been in post for a very short time and have not yet had much opportunity to have an impact on raising standards.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The overwhelming majority of parents who returned questionnaires expressed satisfaction with the education that the school provides for their children. Pupils are pleased with their school and are proud to be members of the school community. They particularly like sporting activities.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop the roles of subject leaders and ensure that they monitor pupils' achievement systematically in order to set challenging targets for all pupils and to pinpoint areas for improvement.
- Provide clearer guidance and training for classroom assistants so that their contribution to the support of pupils' learning is more consistently effective.
- Increase the level of resources to develop the school library, to improve learning opportunities in ICT and to support teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.*

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Overall achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and most are likely to attain all the early learning goals by the end of reception. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and most reach above average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 and most are likely to attain standards that are above average in most of the subjects inspected by the end of Year 6.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards in reading that are well above average.
- Pupils' achievement is good and most attain standards that are above average in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always place enough emphasis on the need to spell accurately and so pupils' spelling is sometimes below the standard expected.
- A lack of resources inhibits children's achievement in the reception class and pupils' achievement in ICT across the school.
- Pupils achieve well in swimming and attain high standards.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is generally below average but it varies from year to year and there is usually a very wide range of ability within each successive year group that enters the school. Some year groups, such as Year 3 and Year 6, have a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This constrains the overall performance of these year groups in national tests. Also a significant proportion of pupils enters and leave the school, especially in Years 3 to 6. This adversely affects the continuity of pupils' learning. Of the nine pupils that took the national tests for pupils in Year 6, for example, five were newcomers to the school.
2. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception in communication, language and literacy as well as in mathematical development. Their achievement in personal, social and emotional development is very good and most are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning well before the end of reception. Resources for creative and physical development are inadequate to support high quality learning and so children do not always achieve as well as they could in these areas. The outdoor learning environment is under-developed and this limits children's learning opportunities and constrains their achievement.

*The table shown below gives average points scores for pupils. Each level in the National Curriculum is given 6 points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term.*

***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.3 (15.2)	16.0 (15.7)
writing	12.4 (15.0)	14.8 (14.6)
mathematics	16.5 (17.2)	16.4 (16.3)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2004, the school's performance was well below national averages in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicate that standards were well below average. These results were poorer than the previous year because there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group and these pupils experienced particular difficulties in literacy. Inspection findings indicate that pupils generally achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and that next year standards by the end of Year 2 are likely to be above average in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics and average in writing, science and ICT. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Handwriting has improved but pupils' spelling is not quite up to the standard expected of pupils in Year 2. Pupils are particularly keen on reading and read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. In mathematics they enjoy counting in twos and recognise sequences, such as odd and even numbers. They know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes and use computers to create block graphs of, for example, of favourite colours.

*The table of national test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2004 has been omitted because there were fewer than ten pupils in the group that took the tests.*

- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and it is particularly good for pupils in Years 5 and 6. This reflects the quality of teaching and learning, which is good in Years 3 and 4 and very good and sometimes excellent in Years 5 and 6. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2004, the school's performance was well above national averages in English and science and above average in mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that standards by the end of Year 6 are likely to be above average in English, mathematics and science. This year's group of pupils in Year 6 has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than last year so some decline in the school's performance is to be expected. Reading is particularly strong and pupils generally attain standards that are well above average. This is because the teacher, who is also the school's literacy co-ordinator, is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about literature. She makes a good contribution to improvements in the subject. Her enthusiasm is infectious and encourages pupils to read widely and with great eagerness. Not only are they well read but also demonstrate good insight into the relative merits of different authors. One thought that Alan Garner is much better at describing places than characters: 'His characters are rather flat and you never really get to know them, unlike Michael Morporgo's characters. You really feel that you are inside their heads and can see what they see.' Careless spelling sometimes mars the work of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Science is also taught well and the subject is well led by the subject leader. In four of the past five years the school's performance in national tests has been well above average.

5. Across the school pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory and pupils attain standards that are broadly satisfactory. However, progress is sometimes impeded by lack of adequate software and the unreliability of equipment.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils in their class. This is predominantly due partly to the support they receive from teaching assistants and also because teachers gear work to match pupils' particular learning needs. Teachers are acutely aware of each pupil's particular learning requirements and match tasks to pupils' needs so that all experience success and make good progress.
7. The whole school goes swimming on Wednesday mornings each week during the autumn term. The teaching sessions are very well organised and pupils' achievement is very good. Most develop into strong swimmers by the end of Year 6. The standards that pupils attain in swimming are higher than is normally found in similar schools.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' personal qualities have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils' moral and social development and their behaviour and attitudes are all very good. Their cultural and spiritual development is good. All groups of pupils show these positive qualities. Attendance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' interest and participation in learning activities at the school are very good.
- Staff treat pupils with great respect and have high expectations of their behaviour so pupils behave very well and relationships in the school are excellent.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils develop social skills rapidly and quickly gain a good understanding of moral choices. They are highly motivated to learn and the school's good system of rewards for their efforts helps to maintain a very orderly school community and a happy learning environment. Pupils' good performance in many aspects of school life is suitably rewarded and celebrated, for example, through the prestigious 'tables badge' awarded for learning multiplication tables and awards that are added to the 'tree of achievement'. Pupils engage in 'circle time', a special time set aside to reflect together on school and social issues, which helps to develop an awareness and sensitivity to personal and community matters. Through drama, role play and 'hot seating', pupils focus on right ways to react when frustrated or provoked. In the school council, pupils are developing their understanding of democratic processes and their responsibilities to the school community as well as the community at large. This sense of responsibility is further helped by working as monitors and supporting charities.
9. Adults lead by example, and the Christian ethos of the school helps to promote a calm, business-like atmosphere. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Lessons run smoothly and good learning takes place in most lessons. Outside, pupils play together happily. Respect for others is excellent. Any anti-social behaviour, such as bullying, is not a problem since the school promotes and monitors pupils' personal development very effectively. Pupils themselves are astonished

if anybody misbehaves and they are quick to remedy potential problems themselves, sensibly and often with exceptional maturity. In the corridor, for example, the monitors whisper quietly, yet sternly, to the youngest children who have not quite grasped the rule of silence when moving from the hall to their classroom. The warm, family atmosphere that has been established in the reception class promotes children's good achievement in the personal, social and emotional area of learning so that most children are on course to attain above the early learning goals before the end of reception.

10. Religious education, assemblies and church events contribute to a heightening of pupils' spiritual awareness and enrich their religious experiences. Opportunities for wonder and reflection arise in other areas of the curriculum too, as in science where pupils marvelled at the beautiful symmetry of salt crystals formed after an experiment on evaporation. Performing arts, visits and multicultural events support pupils' cultural development well. Some subjects, such as geography and history, by the nature of their content, also raise pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures.
11. In class, pupils are willing to do their best as in most lessons the work is well matched to their ability and interest. Opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities, including the music and sports activities and residential trips, extend pupils' learning and help them to become independent and self-reliant. In lessons, pupils approach learning sensibly and have an especially mature attitude to their studies. This is because teachers and support staff maintain high expectations of pupils' social deportment and treat all pupils with appropriate respect. Pupils with special educational needs form good relationships with support staff and this contributes to their good achievement.
12. Attendance is good and most pupils attend the school regularly and arrive promptly. Absence rates are reasonable and are mostly due to illness. It has not been necessary to exclude any pupils for unacceptable behaviour in recent years.

***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.3
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.1
National data:	0.4

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is broad and well balanced with a strong emphasis on literacy. It is taught thoroughly and meets legal requirements. Good arrangements are in place to ensure the welfare and care of pupils. There are good links with parents, the local community and other schools in the area.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good overall. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 they are good. They are good, often very good and occasionally excellent in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have detailed knowledge of each pupil's attainment and progress and assessment procedures overall are good, although there is scope for further development.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching for children in the reception year provides a solid basis for future learning.
- Teachers plan sequences of lessons thoroughly and the good liaison between the three teachers who teach the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 helps to promote continuity in pupils' learning.
- The teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very good and sometimes excellent.
- Teaching assistants usually make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and learning but there are occasions when they are not as effective as they should be.
- Assessment procedures are not organised systematically and consequently target setting for individual pupils is imprecise.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (9%)	7 (22%)	16 (50%)	6 (19%)	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. Teaching for children in the reception year is good. These children join a class which is already well established and many of the new entrants know the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in the class. This helps them to settle quickly and adjust rapidly to school routines. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned to promote good coverage of each of the six areas of learning. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly good. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills and this encourages good progress in language development. There is a good balance between teaching children about the mechanics of language, such as the sounds that letters represent, and promoting an enthusiasm for listening to stories and learning rhymes. Consequently, children make good progress in learning to read. Children achieve well in their mathematical development and the good teaching ensures that firm foundations for future learning are laid effectively. The teacher's planning is thorough and she creates separate plans for the three different year groups in the class. Whilst the teaching is generally good, it is not always exciting or inspiring and, although there is a good number of interesting visitors to broaden curricular experiences, there are too few visits out of school to enrich children's learning opportunities. Also the lack of resources, especially to promote the physical and creative areas of learning, are a barrier to highly effective teaching and restrict children's learning opportunities. This is largely due to the high cost of transport from this relatively isolated rural community.
14. Across the school, teachers plan lessons systematically and plans include precise details of what the teachers expect pupils to learn in each lesson. This information is shared with the pupils at the beginning of each lesson and is referred to during the review sessions towards the ends of lessons when teachers and pupils consider how successful the learning has been. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when teachers' planning was an area of weakness and there was no consistency of approach. There is now much greater consistency and this is particularly so in the class for pupils in Year 3 and 4 where the three teachers responsible for teaching these pupils confer closely to promote consistency in learning.

15. The teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very good and there were examples of excellent teaching in this class. Here the teaching is exceptionally energetic and the pace of lessons is brisk. The excellent relationships create strong bonds between the teacher and pupils and promote high levels of motivation. In this class pupils' learning accelerates and their achievement is very good. The Dutch speaking pupils in the class are all fluent in English speaking skills but the teacher uses skilful questioning strategies to make sure that all pupils have a good grasp of what they have learned and to identify any areas where learning may be insecure. The teacher also makes demands on pupils' thinking skills and challenges them to use their knowledge to make deductions in order to solve problems. There is a strong emphasis on language and literacy that underpins much of the learning. In one excellent personal, social and health education lesson, for example, an extract from a story about stealing provided a very good vehicle to examine human emotions, motives, loyalties and injustices. Excellent teaching was also seen in mathematics.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

**In an excellent mathematics lesson on fractions for pupils in Years 5 and 6, teaching was imaginative and good links were made with other subjects.**

The pace was brisk from the start. The teacher produced a Victorian top hat and referred to the pupils' Victorian history project, 'I have no rabbit but I have un ruban pourpre.', referring to an earlier French lesson on colours. Following the teacher's example pupils took it in turns to be the ringmaster and sit with the top hat and the ribbon on a high stool. 'My ribbon is 5 metres long. I sold two fifths of it. How much have I got left?' The teacher peppered the lesson with quick fire prompts, 'If you divide, is the amount getting smaller or larger?' 'Improper, remember your prefixes from literacy'. Six pupils stood in a hoop and, remembering a science lesson on states of matter, it was agreed that six was a whole unit. When they tried to cram seven pupils in, the unit was unstable, like a top heavy fraction, and one fell out – demonstrating that seven sixths was better expressed as one and a sixth. Pupils demonstrated very high levels of motivation and the review session showed that they had learned a great deal in a short space of time.

16. Teaching assistants generally make a good contribution to the quality of provision. They are often given the task of teaching, under the direction of teachers, small groups, sometimes to the school hall. Often the teaching of these groups is good but occasionally the assistants do not have the necessary skills to teach them effectively and sometimes they have been given insufficiently precise instructions on how to teach these pupils. Also there are occasions when the teaching assistants spend a significant amount of time listening to teachers, especially during the introduction to lessons, rather than being actively involved in supporting pupils' learning.
17. Teachers develop a deep understanding of the learning needs of individual pupils. They keep detailed records of pupils' attainment and progress. Much data is accumulated. Information about pupils' attainment is used well to inform teaching. One assessment test, for example, showed that a group of pupils did not understand how to read the scales of measuring equipment accurately. Pupils' subsequent work shows that they were taught this skill and soon developed a good understanding of how to read scales accurately. However, assessment data is not organised systematically and is not linked precisely enough to National Curriculum levels of attainment. Consequently it does not support the setting of challenging targets for each pupil nor the methodical monitoring of pupils' learning. The school has identified assessment as an area for development and teachers are currently working on improving the clarity of the school's systems.
18. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is now a much higher proportion of good, very good and excellent teaching and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching for all groups of pupils, including those with special

educational needs, those whose home language is not English and the more able pupils, is mostly good. The good quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good overall. It is satisfactory in ICT. Inadequate resources for teaching ICT and the unreliability of the computers are barriers to effective teaching and hamper pupils' learning. Insufficient teaching was seen in the other subjects to be able to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However, there were examples of excellent teaching in swimming and in a personal, social and health education lesson as well as some very good teaching in French and history.

## **The curriculum**

The quality and range of learning opportunities are good overall. They are satisfactory in the reception year. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are good and a good range of activities outside the classroom is provided. The accommodation to support pupils' learning is satisfactory but resources overall are inadequate.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good learning opportunities in English, mathematics, science, French and most other subjects contribute to pupils' good achievement.
- Technical problems with ICT equipment and lack of resources restrict opportunities for teaching and learning and prevent standards from being higher than the national expectation.
- There is good enrichment of the curriculum, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6, through extra-curricular activities, visits out of school and visitors who talk to pupils about their jobs and experiences.
- Facilities to enhance learning opportunities for children in the reception year outside the classroom are inadequate and limited resources restrict achievement in the creative and physical areas of learning.
- Inadequate computer equipment and the lack of a library restrict pupils' opportunities to develop research skills.

## Commentary

19. In the reception class, children's needs are met satisfactorily. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is broad and well balanced. It meets pupils' needs well in English, mathematics and science and in most other subjects. This is a significant factor in pupils' good achievement. Effective planning is now in place for all subjects, rectifying a weakness found at the last inspection.
20. The good learning opportunities in English and mathematics are based on national strategies. Teachers are skilled in adjusting the content to match pupils' differing learning needs so that all groups of pupils in the mixed age classes are challenged at appropriate levels. Effective opportunities are provided for extending speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in many areas of the curriculum. This use of language and literacy skills in other subjects makes a significant contribution to pupils' good progress in the development of key skills in English. The setting aside of some time each week as 'personal target time' is proving successful in concentrating pupils' attention on aspects of their English and mathematics that need improvement, as well as aspects of personal development. It plays a key role in pupils' good achievement.
21. In science, there is good attention to practical and investigative work and this contributes well to the standards attained. Pupils not only develop their skills in scientific enquiry effectively, but also apply and develop their scientific knowledge and understanding well. Practical activities in many subjects are particularly successful in motivating pupils and promoting very good attitudes.
22. Learning opportunities in ICT are satisfactory. The school has worked hard to rectify the weaknesses found at the last inspection. Standards have risen as a result. Problems with equipment, however, have restricted the teaching, constrained learning opportunities and limited the use of computers. Consequently, this has prevented better than satisfactory development of pupils' competence in using computers, even though there is much good teaching in lessons. The use of ICT in other subjects is inadequately developed. There are missed opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subjects through ICT-related tasks, through research on the Internet and through exploring programs to support, for example, musical composition and the use of paint programs to illustrate work.
23. An excellent feature in the provision for physical education is the swimming tuition. Very good teamwork from teachers, learning support assistants and parents, under the excellent guidance of the professional instructor, ensures that skills are developed systematically. As a result, all groups of children and pupils grow in confidence as swimmers and develop skills to a well above average standard by the end of Year 6.
24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Activities are usually modified well to meet individual needs and effective support is given when necessary. There is some good one-to-one and small group assistance, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well in most classes to provide activities that are related to the short-term targets in the individual education plans designed specifically for pupils with special educational needs.
25. There is good extra-curricular enrichment of the curriculum. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning. Homework clubs are offered as well as activities in a range of sports. All these activities motivate and interest pupils and help them to develop positive attitudes to school and to learning. Visits to places of interest, a residential journey and a wealth of visitors add an additional dimension to the curriculum in a range of subjects. However, children in the reception class have too few visits to places of interest in the locality.
26. The accommodation offers an adequate range of facilities. However, the lack of a library restricts opportunities for pupils to practise research skills. External accommodation generally



provides good facilities for outdoor study and play, contributing effectively to the physical education curriculum. Although some improvements have been made to external accommodation for the reception children, there is no covered area and the lack of climbing apparatus restricts opportunities for physical development. Resources to support learning in the physical and creative areas of learning for children in the reception class are inadequate. Resources for ICT are inadequate and limit pupils' learning opportunities and the standards they attain. The lavatories are inadequate for the number of pupils now attending the school and some teaching time is lost during a tightly timetabled hand washing session for each class before lunch. The management of the school has endeavoured to improve resources across the school and many improvements have been made in recent years. However, the school receives less money per pupil than the national average, and the governing body feels obliged to conserve funds in anticipation of a decline in income caused by the probability of a falling roll.

## **Care, guidance and support**

As at the time of the last inspection, pastoral care and support for pupils are good. Advice and guidance for pupils to improve their work are developing well. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good. The school takes appropriate steps to ensure health and safety for all.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The caring ethos of the school promotes a productive learning environment.
- Arrangements to help newcomers to the school settle in are good and new pupils quickly feel part of the school family.
- The school is very good at helping vulnerable pupils to feel safe and secure.

## **Commentary**

27. The commitment of staff to the welfare and happiness of all pupils creates a good learning atmosphere. Parents are rightly confident that their children are fairly treated and well cared for. The school is vigilant about health and safety matters. Day-to-day care of the buildings ensures that any perceived hazards are dealt with promptly. Arrangements to treat unwell pupils are good. The headteacher manages child protection procedures well and has good oversight of the provision. She keeps others fully informed of any issues that arise. Supervision at breaktime and lunchtime is good. Science lessons and lessons in personal, social and health education help to raise pupils' awareness of a wide range of health and social issues, such as the damage caused by illegal drugs. However, the school has very little external support in teaching sex education or in raising drugs awareness, such as input from the school nurse or visiting specialists. Teaching and support staff work well together to ensure that pupils settle in happily and that they and their parents quickly feel at home. Transfer to secondary schools is managed well and parents report that their children settle happily in their new schools.
28. The systems to monitor individual achievement and to use this information to support pupils' performance are developing well. Pupils, particularly the older ones, know what they need to do to improve their work but targets for improvement are not closely linked to progress through the attainment levels of the National Curriculum. Staff spend a good deal of time discussing the pastoral needs of pupils and this exchange of information, supported by detailed written records, provides effective means to monitor pupils' personal development. The school is a well-ordered community and rewards are used well to promote an atmosphere that is free from any oppressive behaviour or bullying.

Vulnerable pupils and those who are in public care are supported sensitively and are given particular attention to make sure that they feel comfortable in their learning environment. All staff are very sensitive to the needs of particular individuals and provide skilful support. The development of pupils is monitored very carefully.

29. The school council is well established and the views of the council are listened to and acted upon. The class councils also provide very effective means to gauge pupils' views and involve them in shaping the work of the school. Pupils report that they feel valued and that staff are always on hand to listen to them.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Partnership with parents is good and has improved since the last inspection. It is now more effective in supporting pupils' learning. Good links with the local schools support the curriculum well and help to promote pupils' smooth transfer to the next phase of their education. Links with the wider community extend pupils' learning experiences well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and most support their children's learning well.
- Links with other schools and wider community are productive.

### **Commentary**

30. Parents feel sufficiently informed about the work of the school and pupils' progress. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report contain useful information and meet statutory requirements. On occasions parents' views about the work of the school are sought and used to improve the school's work. Parents are invited to individual and collective consultations where the curriculum and pupils' progress are discussed. Pupils' annual progress reports provide parents with good information about what pupils have been taught in each subject. They do not always refer to the amount of progress that pupils have made or to targets for future learning in terms of the levels of attainment of the National Curriculum. Consequently, parents cannot always be sure what stage pupils have reached in their progress through the National Curriculum. The school is welcoming and parents have easy access to teachers and good opportunities to discuss their children's progress.
31. The school can rely on parents' co-operation in the education of their children. Homework is well supported. Parents' attendance at informal meetings and activities is high. Many work as volunteer helpers and fund raisers; the school has very recently formed a Parent Teacher Association, known as 'Friends of Brisley School'. Educational visits are well supported by parents. Parents are closely involved in monitoring the progress of their children when they have been identified as having special educational needs and contribute to the writing of individual education plans that are individually tailored to meet particular needs.
32. Links with the community are strong and support pupils' learning well. Links with the secondary schools ensure smooth transition and enrich the curriculum, especially in science as the local high school has specialist science status. The school liaises closely with other schools in the area and this allows the sharing of resources and good practice.

Visits and visitors, especially involving the church, support the curriculum and contribute towards pupils' welfare and personal development. Pupils gain good learning experiences and a deeper understanding of the wider community through visits to places of interest, such as the local supermarket, and they broaden their understanding of times past through thought provoking activities such as taking part in a simulated evacuees day where they dressed as wartime evacuees and engaged in role play, including the heart-rending experience of leaving home for an unknown destination.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and governors give good support. Together they have built a strong team of teaching and support staff who share a commitment to improving standards. The school has just emerged from a difficult period where the headteacher's absence through ill-health checked the rate of improvement. The work of the governing body is good and governors provide effective support.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is good at analysing its performance and identifying appropriate priorities for improvement.
- The school is successful in promoting a strong sense of teamwork among staff that has a positive influence on efficient working practices.
- Financial control is good and money is managed prudently.
- Pupils' learning and their rates of progress are not monitored systematically in order to ensure that targets for future learning are appropriately challenging.

### **Commentary**

33. The headteacher provides good leadership and management and has worked hard to improve the school on many fronts since the last inspection. Standards have risen significantly, as has the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher was appointed just prior to the last inspection and the inspection team recognised that she had begun to make significant improvements in a short space of time. However, ill-health intervened and this slowed the pace of improvement for a while. This difficult period was managed very well by staff and governors. The school is now back on course and has good capacity to improve further. However, it did slow anticipated initiatives, such as developing the roles of subject leaders and developing more systematic assessment procedures. Subjects such as English and science are led and managed well but the systematic monitoring of pupils' learning across the curriculum is an area for further development.
34. Each year the school produces a very good school improvement plan. This comprehensive document has evolved following a thorough school self-review conducted by the headteacher, staff and governors. It clearly identifies the most urgent priority areas for development and helps to focus time and resources on them. It also includes details of the governing body's committees so that each has a very clear brief to guide their work. One of the school's main priorities is to improve assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in order to enhance target setting procedures. This concurs with inspection findings on the main area for improvement.
35. The school joined the local education authority's 'Well Being Project', designed to enhance the ability of all staff to work together at optimum levels. It involved a thorough

analysis of working practices in order to remove any barriers to efficiency and to maximise conditions that promoted trust and teamwork. The school was highly successful and the project supported the school's ethos of openly involving all associated with the school in seeking improvements in provision for the pupils.

36. The governing body works efficiently. Governors are closely associated with the school and provide good support. Several are able to work in classrooms and this gives them a good insight into the workings of the school. The headteacher ensures that governors are kept well informed about all school issues. Consequently, governors have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They support the school well, particularly in its efforts to ensure that each pupil has full access to all areas of the curriculum and that the welfare of each is fostered. They liaise closely with parents and report that parents hold the school in high esteem. The school secretary makes a strong contribution to the smooth running of the school and to the maintenance of good avenues of communication. She has a very good understanding of school finances and assists with the vigilant monitoring of the budget. Her strong support in managing the day-to-day running of the school helps the headteacher to manage the heavy teaching commitment that she currently undertakes.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	220,769
Total expenditure	219,611
Expenditure per pupil	2,889

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,404
Balance carried forward to the next	25,562

37. The amount of money that the school spends on each pupil is below the national average. The school has accumulated a substantial balance in reserve. This is because the school roll is predicted to decline steadily over the next few years with a consequent loss of income. The governing body is determined not to run the risk of being unable to make the budget balance when income falls. The school is endeavouring to maintain staffing at around current levels despite the anticipated loss of income. This has an impact on the amount of money that the school can spend on resources for learning. As a result, the learning environment for the children in reception and ICT are both areas that are under-resourced. The headteacher and the governing body manage the budget well and income is used prudently. Taking into account the below average income, the good improvement since the last inspection, the good teaching and the pupils' good achievement, 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**

38. There are only eight children in the reception year and at present they only attend school for the morning sessions. They work alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. Consequently the teacher and the teaching assistant are required to cater for the learning needs of children who have only just reached the age of four as well as those who are over seven years old. Generally they work well together to manage this very broad age range and children's widely contrasting stages of development. The leadership and management of provision in the Foundation Stage are generally satisfactory. However, there are times when the teaching assistant is given responsibility for managing the group of reception children without sufficiently detailed guidance on precisely what the children are expected to learn during a session. Consequently, the lessons are not always as productive as they should be because children are not always clear about exactly what they are expected to do. However, teaching is mostly good and children are always fully engaged in the activities provided. Lessons are carefully planned and the classroom is well prepared to promote effective learning and to make best use of time. The role play area changes every half term to match the specific theme that the class are following. However, there is considerable scope to enhance learning opportunities through more imaginative development of the creative learning areas in the classroom.
39. There is a good emphasis on speaking and listening as well as providing very well for children's social and emotional needs. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Children are likely to attain the standards that match national expectations for this year group and this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. However, personal, social and emotional development is a strong feature of the provision and is better now than at the time of the last inspection. The school has recognised the need for more good quality reading books and this shortcoming is being addressed. Resources are inadequate to support highly effective learning, especially in the creative and physical areas of learning. There is no undercover outdoor area, wheeled vehicles are not of the best quality and the play equipment, such as dressing up clothes for role play, is in short supply. Equipment to promote exciting and stimulating activities is scarce. Accommodation is adequate but the outside learning area can only be used in fine weather as there is no undercover facility.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A warm and friendly environment has been established and this promotes children's personal development well.
- Children join a class which is well established and where the older pupils take their responsibilities for helping the younger ones very seriously.

## Commentary

40. Children's achievement in this area of learning is very good and most are likely to attain above the early learning goals before the end of reception. The youngest children enter school with some anxiety as they are much smaller and much younger than most of the other pupils in the class. Several appeared tentative at the beginning of the inspection week as they had only been attending the school for a short time. The warm and welcoming environment helped them to adjust readily to school routines. They grew in confidence as the week progressed and were happy to choose activities and make decisions about, for example, whether they needed to put on their coats at playtime. They demonstrated an increasing willingness to participate in group discussions and to answer the teacher's questions. They listen to stories intently and concentrate well on the tasks in hand. They are increasingly sensitive to the needs of others and are becoming good at taking turns, although there are times when squabbles occur, 'I'm playing with the farm – she's not allowed!' However such disagreements are quickly sorted out through the rapid intervention of an adult.
41. Teaching is generally very good. The teacher consciously chooses the youngest children during question and answer sessions and makes sure that they are given appropriate problems to answer. The teacher's sensitive attention to individuals, and to ensuring that all the children experience success, helps to build children's confidence rapidly. Great emphasis is placed on co-operating and on helping each other. The older ones relish their roles as protectors and supporters of the youngest children and one of the things they like about school is being able to 'help the little ones'. The youngest children are in awe of the accomplishments of the older pupils. The older ones provide good role models as they work sensibly and produce well-written pieces of work. The teacher maintains a calm, business-like approach, tempered by much gentle humour and encouragement. There is a strong emphasis on remembering social conventions, such as saying, 'please' and 'thank-you'. The reception children enter a classroom where routines have been well established and where the older ones tend to dominate. Nevertheless, they soon develop a sense of ownership and refer to 'my classroom' and 'my teacher'. The classroom assistant works in close liaison with the class teacher but tends, when managing groups of children, to do too much for them rather than encouraging independence.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good; the teacher listens carefully to children's thoughts and opinions, which encourages them to express themselves confidently.
- The teaching assistant has not received enough training in how to teach the reception year group effectively.

## Commentary

42. The teacher is sensitive to each individual and skilfully encourages them to offer their views and opinions. She is good at waiting, for however long it takes, for children to sort out their thoughts and to compose their responses to questions or to articulate their

thoughts. She treats all contributions seriously and this encourages the children to respond readily and sensibly. Consequently, discussions provide a rich learning experience. Whilst teaching is generally good and helps children to achieve well, it is not so effective when the teaching assistant, rather than the teacher, works with the children. This is because the assistant has not been sufficiently trained in how to teach this age group, nor is there sufficient guidance on what precisely the children are expected to learn. Although the teacher's planning refers specifically to the early learning goals, as specified in national guidance, the activities provided do not directly relate to the achievement of particular goals. This leads to a lack of direction and clear purpose when the children move to group activities. Teaching is at its best when pupils share a 'big book' under the direction of the teacher. Here the children listen with great concentration as they follow the story. They study the text intently and with enthusiasm as they search for familiar letters or words. They exclaim with excitement when they identify rhyming words, for example, or recognise any letters with which they have become familiar. These positive attitudes to learning help them to achieve well and most are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception.

43. The teacher is good at encouraging speech through role play. She visits the class hospital and asks after the patients and asks to see the doctor's notes. Children use 'play writing' to make notes on the patient's condition and this helps them to understand that writing has different purposes. Most are beginning to write their names fairly legibly, although several still reverse letters or write from right to left. Most have a good understanding of the link between the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. The teacher places a strong emphasis on the development of children's understanding of phonics and they are developing a steadily increasing knowledge of a range of letters and sounds. Most can identify the initial sounds of words. This developing understanding, coupled with their great interest in stories and story books, demonstrates that good foundations are being laid for the growth of early reading and writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a strong emphasis on pattern and shape which helps to foster an enthusiasm for learning.
- The younger children learn a great deal from working alongside the older pupils.

### **Commentary**

44. Teaching is good and helps children to achieve well. There is a good emphasis on singing number songs such as 'Five Fat Sausages Sizzling in the Pan' and 'Five Speckled Frogs sit on a Speckled Log'. These help the children to gain a good understanding of basic subtraction. They also lay places on the dining table in the class home corner and have to make sure that they have a matching number of knives, forks and spoons. There is a particularly strong emphasis on encouraging children to recognise patterns. They print repeating patterns of different shapes and colours, thread beads in repeating patterns and fit shapes, such as squares and equilateral triangles, together to make different larger shapes. Most children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception.

45. It was very noticeable in one lesson that, although the reception year were engaged in a measuring activity that was appropriate to their particular stage of development, they were also taking in parts of the content of the activity in which the oldest pupils were engaged. The reception group were placing five pieces of ribbon in order from longest to shortest and were consolidating the vocabulary of mathematics through using terms such as 'shorter than' and 'longer than'. The older pupils were measuring in metres and centimetres. The younger ones took note and listened in to the activities of the older pupils. It was clear from discussions with the children that a considerable amount of incidental learning takes place and that they find working alongside the older ones stimulating. Several knew, for example, that the classroom could be measured in metres.

*Insufficient teaching could be seen to form judgements about overall provision in the other areas of learning but each was sampled.*

46. The teacher's planning for the development of children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is clear and follows national guidance for the development of early learning skills. Careful notes are kept of children's progress towards the early learning goals and these indicate that most are likely to attain the goals by the end of reception. Children have a well-developed sense of curiosity about their world and this is fostered satisfactorily in the classroom. Children are fascinated by the current project on 'Ourselves' and marvel at how they have grown over the past four years. They examine how different they are now from when they were first born and discuss how they started to become more independent when they were toddlers. Children enjoy using construction kits to build, for example, the witch's house described in the story book they studied in a literacy lesson. They learn about cultural traditions as they join in celebrations such as harvest festival, Christmas and Easter. They have good opportunities to study the natural world through the examination of insects or 'mini-beasts' and through growing plants in the classroom. Although the curriculum for this area of learning is planned thoroughly, activities lack excitement and are not particularly inspiring. Also there are very few visits to places of interest outside school, due largely to the high cost of transport from this isolated rural community.
47. The teacher has written good plans for promoting children's **physical development**. These are organised into separate units of work to be taught each half term. Plans include precise details of what it is expected that children will learn during the course of each half term. Plans describe how children's physical development will be fostered through dance and gymnastics as well as how fine physical co-ordination, such as that needed for manipulating materials and handling tools, will be developed. One very good lesson was seen at the local swimming pool. Here the teaching was very good and children made very good progress in learning to swim. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging children to promote good health. Pupils learn what constitutes a healthy diet and participate in such activities as creating a model of a healthy meal and comparing this with an unhealthy plate of food. Fruit and vegetables are distributed free of charge each day and this helps to promote a healthy diet. Resources are limited and there are few opportunities for physical activities outdoors. Although this restricts learning opportunities, assessments of pupils' progress indicate that most are likely to meet the early learning goals by the end of reception.
48. The teacher's plans for promoting **creative development** indicate that this area of learning is taught systematically. Children have studied Van Gogh's self-portraits and



have enjoyed studying their faces in mirrors before painting their own self-portraits. The work they produced was of good quality. They are introduced to a wide range of media and paint portraits in pastel crayons and charcoal as well as paint. Although no teaching of music was seen, it is clear from plans that singing, listening to music and creating musical compositions features strongly in the curriculum. Drama, role play and dance are also well represented but resources are inadequate to promote high quality teaching and learning. Although assessments of children's attainment indicate that most pupils are likely to attain the early learning goals, their achievement is constrained because learning areas are under-developed. Equipment in the role play areas, for example, is in short supply and is not of good quality.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

*English is reported in full and French was sampled.*

49. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy **French** lessons. Although insufficient work was seen to make judgements about overall provision, some very good teaching was observed. In a very good lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher maintained a brisk, business-like approach throughout the lesson. In this lesson many aspects of language were examined and compared with English, such as the influence of Norman French since 1066 and how in French the order of phrases is sometimes reversed, as in 'It is of what colour?' The words for French colours were explored and written on the whiteboard. With prompting the pupils realised that they had been written in the order of the colours in a rainbow. The teacher asked them to deduce therefore the meaning of, 'un arc-en-ciel'. The Dutch speaking pupils in the class were involved and they wrote under the French words, 'rood, oranj, geel, groen, blauw, paars, rose.' One pupil noted how blue in German was the same as the Dutch word. This was not just a very good French lesson, it was also a lesson that heightened pupils' understanding of language generally and promoted a fascination for the similarities and differences between different European languages.
50. A good lesson was seen in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 where the teacher played the guitar well to accompany the singing of French songs about days of the week. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed singing the catchy songs. At the end of the lesson the teacher consolidated learning by dismissing the class with, 'Au revoir, tout le monde', to which the pupils replied, 'Au revoir, madam, à bientôt.' In this class the pupils also answer the register in French and this helps to consolidate learning. They are also studying Turkey in geography and exchange greetings and sometimes answer the register in Turkish. It is clear that pupils are provided with a good introduction to the French language which prepares them well for studying the subject at their secondary schools.

### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in reading for pupils in Year 6 are well above average; pupils develop a love of literature and many become avid readers.
- Pupils' spelling is not as well developed as it should be.

- Pupils' achievement is good because teaching is effective but teachers do not always make good use of teaching assistants to support learning.
- Pupils do not always know exactly what they need to do to progress from one National Curriculum level to the next.
- Limited library facilities restrict opportunities for research skills.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and is determined to improve provision further.

## Commentary

51. Teaching is good and as a result all groups of pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, standards are likely to be above average in reading, speaking and listening. They are broadly average in writing. By the end of Year 6, standards are likely to be above average in speaking and listening and in writing and well above average in reading. Pupils particularly enjoy reading fiction and develop a broad knowledge of children's literature. Throughout the school, the quality of handwriting has improved since the last inspection so that by the end of Year 6 almost all pupils write in a joined and fluent style. There is a weakness, however, in spelling, particularly in Years 1 and 2. This is because there is not enough emphasis on the importance of accurate spelling in all classes. Opportunities are missed to dwell on the key vocabulary to be used in lessons and to explore spelling rules and the structure of words.
52. All groups of pupils achieve well because teaching and the learning opportunities, which are based on the National Literacy Strategy, are good in all year groups. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. Groups of pupils of different capability, including those who are the most able, have work that is matched to their needs and is suitably challenging. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. This is because lessons are well planned to take account of their specific needs. In most instances, these are met well, particularly in the teaching of small groups when taken out of class or when teaching assistants are used specifically to provide targeted support. However, there are occasions when support staff are present in lessons but are not used well enough to support pupils' learning. They sometimes adopt a passive role rather than one in which they are actively involved in supporting pupils.
53. Teachers manage pupils very well and communicate the purpose of lessons clearly. Classrooms are very well organised to promote effective learning. The practice of setting class and individual targets is effective and helps pupils know what they need to focus on in order to improve. However, teachers do not make sufficient reference to pupils' targets in lessons and the targets set are not always closely linked to National Curriculum levels of attainment. Consequently, pupils are not fully aware of exactly what they must do to move from one level of attainment to the next. Much of the marking of pupils' work throughout Years 1 to 6 is good and gives clear guidance for improvement as well as telling pupils what they do well. Pupils often take action in response and try to make their writing better. In some lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2, there is not enough attention paid to spelling errors. As a result, there are some missed opportunities for all pupils to develop even higher standards of writing.
54. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to write for different purposes and introduce them to a wide range of texts. There is an appropriate balance between fiction, poetry and non-fiction in both reading and writing. Pupils are given clear guidance as to how the style and format of writing is adapted according to its intended audience. As a result, pupils demonstrate maturity in their approach to reading. Most read and speak very confidently, express their opinions strongly and write well for a range of purposes.
55. The school makes the best use of its limited accommodation to store and display reading materials. However, the lack of adequate library facilities means that pupils have too few opportunities to develop research skills as they should. Consequently, their achievement in reading for research purposes is no better than satisfactory.

56. The leadership and management of English are good and are firmly focused on exploring avenues for improvement. There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection and standards are now higher than they were. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a very secure understanding of what generates effective teaching and learning. However, she has not had sufficient opportunity, other than informally, to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning across the school. The school has recognised that the systematic monitoring of pupils' learning and achievement is a priority if weaknesses in provision are to be identified and standards are to be raised further.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

57. There are good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their language and literacy skills in other subjects, such as note taking in science and the use of literature in personal, health and social education and history. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, read first-hand accounts of children working in mines in Victorian times and write from the points of view of evacuees in World War Two. In Years 1 and 2 pupils increase their skills in geography while reading and writing about a fictional island in Scotland. Through this writing they deepen their knowledge and understanding in these other subjects as well as improving their reading and writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and most attain standards that are above average.
- The work that pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce is very neatly presented and the work is of good quality.
- Teaching is generally good and there are examples of excellent teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching assistants do not always have the skills required to teach groups effectively.

### **Commentary**

58. By the end of Year 2, and again by the end of Year 6, pupils are likely to attain standards that are above average. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well. Teachers are particularly good at motivating pupils. As a result, pupils develop a serious approach to work and have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils develop a wide mathematical vocabulary and use terms accurately. They are good at recalling number facts and most of the older pupils know their multiplication tables. They use this knowledge well when solving problems.
59. Pupils' exercise books are neat and tidy. They also file their work carefully in folders. These include a good contents page so that each aspect of the subject can be accessed readily. The folders also include clear targets such as, 'I can divide decimals' and teachers liaise with pupils to highlight such statements when the pupils have achieved the target. This helps to demonstrate attainment and progress clearly. However, these targets sheets are the same for each pupil in the year group and are not tailored specifically to suit individual needs. Pupils cover a wide range of mathematical topics. They describe

the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes accurately. They use mathematical vocabulary with precision. They carefully colour shapes that they have fitted together in complex patterns or tessellations and have produced good work on reflective symmetry.

60. Teaching is good and skills are taught systematically. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and the best marking shows pupils where they have gone wrong and how they can correct their mistakes. Some teachers also seize opportunities to correct inaccurate spelling and insist on a high quality of presentation. This indicates that most teachers maintain high expectations of pupils' performance. Homework is a regular feature of pupils' work and includes colouring work to illustrate data or patterns in number or work on using calculators. Some of the homework activities are quite time consuming and their completion at home helps to ensure that teaching time in class is used to best effect. Teachers modify tasks to match the learning needs of different groups within each class and this helps all groups to achieve success. Teaching is particularly imaginative and exciting in Years 5 and 6. Here lessons proceed at a very brisk pace and pupils' progress accelerates rapidly.
61. Teaching assistants often take groups of pupils, usually lower attaining pupils, for activities in the hall. The quality of teaching for these groups is usually at least satisfactory but there are occasions when the time is not used as productively as it could be. Also the materials used are not always entirely in tune with pupils' learning needs. In one lesson on fractions, for example, the activity was largely a paper and pencil exercise whereas the pupils needed a great deal of practical work involving cutting up cakes, apples, pizzas or pies and sharing the pieces equally to answer such questions as, 'I have two apples and five children. If I shared them equally, what fraction of the apples would each child have?' Such practical activities, designed to develop an understanding of the relationship between fractions and dividing equally, are under-emphasised and this restricts the progress that pupils make.
62. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The headteacher has accepted responsibility for managing the subject and being accountable for the standards that pupils attain but she has a heavy teaching commitment as well as many administrative responsibilities so finds it difficult to dwell specifically on improving provision in this subject. However, communication between staff is very good and as a result there is a great deal of informal monitoring. This revealed, for example, that the marking of pupils' work was not always followed up; pupils got things wrong and nothing was done about it. As a result the school's marking policy was adjusted so that teachers were able to identify weaknesses in pupils' understanding more clearly and were in a better position to take the necessary remedial action. Also the school has begun to analyse test results more systematically in order to identify areas of weakness. The school places great emphasis on learning multiplication tables. Pupils prepare for a rigorous individual test in the headteacher's study. Those who pass are awarded a prestigious badge which they wear with great pride. This helps to maintain pupils' enthusiasm for learning basic skills. The school has facilitated a good course for parents called 'Keeping up with the Children', where parents have visited the school for a series of six lessons on how mathematics is taught. This was popular and helped to develop the partnership in learning between home and school.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils record data from measuring evaporation rates and pupils create graphs of, for example, how many sit-ups they can complete in a minute. In geography, pupils use their understanding of co-ordinates to plot specific points in map-work exercises. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use force meters to measure the amount of 'pull' it takes to drag loads over different surfaces. They understand that they are measuring force in units called Newtons. However, opportunities are missed to collect everyday data about the weather, for example, in order to create charts and graphs to illustrate and interpret findings.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards that are above average.
- Teaching is generally good and stimulates a keen interest in the subject.
- The subject is led and managed well by the enthusiastic co-ordinator.

### Commentary

64. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils are likely to attain standards that are average by the end of Year 2. Standards are likely to be above average by the end of Year 6 and this represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the water cycle and explain clearly that the fresh glass of water that had just been drawn from the tap may in fact have been drunk by the dinosaurs. They were amazed to see the plate of salt crystals that remained after the water in their saturated solution had evaporated. There were gasps of awe as they studied the crystals under the computerised microscope and examined the symmetrical beauty of each.
65. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 tends not to involve enough first-hand practical work. In a lesson on growing up, for example, pupils were required to write sentences about the differences between babies and children of their own age. This was not very exciting. In contrast pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed a good lesson where they conducted experiments to see how to make bulbs, in a variety of circuits, glow more brightly. They were very good at controlling all but one of the variables they had identified and conducting the tests fairly. Here the teacher maintained high expectations of pupils' ability to understand the complexities of electrical circuits. She explained clearly how the delicate filament in bulbs glowed when a current was passed through it and how the bulb would blow if the current was too strong. She related this to the fuse box at home and how too much electrical force could overload the circuit and break the fuse wire. Pupils examined the 2.5 voltage mark on a bulb and concluded that their circuit, which included two 1.5 volt cells, would probably be all right but that a 4.5 volt battery would almost certainly blow the bulb.
66. The style of teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is particularly effective because in many lessons across the curriculum the teacher insists on pupils using information to make

deductions to solve all manner of everyday problems. She also insists that pupils give clear, accurate explanations of phenomena. When discussing evaporation she confronted the pupils with her observation, 'So the water disappears. Is that right? Come on you should all be having a real go at me. Who can offer a proper explanation?' and 'So water boils at 100 degrees centigrade. If we keep heating it will it get hotter and hotter? Will it reach, perhaps, 150 degrees, 200 degrees? Come on, you have the knowledge to answer this.' and 'Why doesn't it rain salty water?' In one very good lesson in Years 5 and 6 pupils quickly learned a little song, 'The Brisley Boogie Woogie' to help them remember facts about evaporation, condensation, precipitation and saturation. This lively teaching promoted highly effective learning and was great fun for all involved.

67. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has helped to forge very strong links with the high school. Resources were identified as an area of weakness and the high school, which has specialist science status, funded a good bank of resources, including such items as a skeleton, three-dimensional models of parts of the human body, and videos and 'big books' that are loaned to local primary schools. Pupils in Year 6 visit the high school for a science day prior to their transfer. Last term they studied forensic science and had to examine clues such as hair and powder under a microscope as part of a crime solving exercise. In March 2003 all pupils in Years 3 to 6 visited the Science Museum in London. The school reports that this was a wonderful experience which did much to generate enthusiasm for the subject. They also visit the 'hands on' science museum in Norwich and talk knowledgeably about what they learned there. Scientists from industry visit the school and conduct experiments with children, such as using powerful microscopes to examine the iron in cornflakes and how the iron in orange juice is neutralised by tea. The subject leader also organises a science afternoon where all pupils engage in a very wide range of experiments from examining air currents to heating eggs in the microwave oven. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject. This enthusiasm is infectious and is in part responsible for the high standards that the school often attains in national tests.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Problems with equipment restrict opportunities for teaching and learning and have a detrimental effect on pupils' achievement.
- Resources for ICT are inadequate.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and prepare lessons well so that pupils enjoy using computers and work well together on them.

### **Commentary**

68. Standards are at the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents good improvement since the last inspection in the standards that pupils attain. Basic skills in using computers are now at the level they should be. Pupils have a good understanding of the use of technology beyond school and in everyday life and the purpose it serves. The range of learning opportunities now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

69. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory and there are examples of teaching and learning that are particularly effective. Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. They demonstrate skills effectively and show pupils how programs can be used to support learning. Lessons are well prepared. From the start of this term, the time-table has been adjusted to allow whole class teaching. At lunchtime on Mondays all the school's computers are moved into the hall where groups take it in turns to learn specific skills. This allows the co-ordinator to teach specific skills systematically to a whole year group at the same time. However, there are occasions when this hall time is not used to maximum effect. For example, when the teacher is overlong in demonstration and discussion there is too little time for pupils to practise what has been taught. Consequently, progress is slower than it should be.
70. Teachers are enthusiastic and motivate pupils well. As a result, pupils enjoy using the computers and this encourages them to work hard. They share machines well, and working together in this way contributes effectively to their personal development. All pupils achieve equally in lessons regardless of their ability, gender or background because the support from teachers is effective and teachers are sensitive to the varying learning needs of each individual within the class.
71. The overall quality of provision is restricted by the unreliable quality of the existing equipment and the limited resources. This significantly restricts opportunities for teaching and learning and means that standards are not as high as they could be. The school is doing its best within the constraints of its budget to improve resources. A new set of pupils' workbooks has been purchased to check knowledge, understanding and skills in Years 3 to 6 and some new equipment, including laptop computers, has been ordered.
72. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader is enthusiastic and works hard to support colleagues. Since the last inspection, planning has improved and teaching guidelines ensure teachers build pupils' computer skills systematically over time. This has brought about improvements, particularly in the development of basic skills. Standards have risen, but there is not a close enough focus on developing teaching and learning, through systematic monitoring, in order to lift standards to a higher level and to increase the use of the pupils' skills in other subjects.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

73. Classroom computers are used satisfactorily in lessons to support pupils' work, mainly in English and mathematics and in some other subjects such as history. This gives pupils adequate opportunities to practise ICT skills and to develop knowledge and understanding in other subjects through the use of computers. The further development of skills, knowledge and understanding is restricted by a shortage of computer programs. The school recognises that this aspect of provision is in need of improvement and some ways of achieving this are already under consideration.

### **HUMANITIES**

*History and geography were sampled. Religious education was inspected separately as the school is a voluntary aided Church of England school.*

74. In **history**, standards are at the level expected nationally in Year 6 as they were at the last inspection. Pupils develop a good sense of chronology and engage satisfactorily in historical enquiry through their study of a range of topics including the Ancient Egyptian, Tudor and Victorian periods, as well as local history. Evidence from pupils' work and from the one lesson observed indicates that standards in Years 1 and 2 have improved since the last inspection and are now at the level they should be.
75. Not enough lessons were seen to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, very good history teaching was seen in both Years 3 and 4 and in Years 5 and 6. What made the lessons very good were the very effective questioning, very good explanations and use of resources that challenged and captivated pupils' interest so that they began to visualise what life was like at a particular time in the past.
76. In Years 3 to 6, samples of pupils' work indicate that standards in **geography** have been maintained since the last inspection at broadly average levels. Good work was seen in Years 3 and 4 where pupils were studying Turkey. This included a simulated visit to the town of Icmeler. Good links were made with religious education when pupils studied the religion of the Turkish people, as well as their customs and beliefs. Good links were made with art and design as pupils studied the traditional patterns woven into kilims, how the material derives from silk worms and the dyes are extracted from roots and berries. The pupils in this class also answered the register in Turkish, further consolidating their knowledge of European languages. A good lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2. Here good links were made with literacy as pupils studied the differences between their locality and a Scottish island, which featured in one of their favourite series of story books about the imaginary isle of Struay. Pupils had a good understanding of the principal features of their area including 'milking cows and barns'. They know the name of their village, the county they live in and how to find their locality on a map. They enjoy studying maps and identifying features such as rivers, roads and mountains. There is every indication that standards are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils in Year 2. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average in this age group.
77. Curricular planning in both history and geography is much improved since the last inspection and is based on national guidance. A strength of provision is the range of visits and field studies to venues such as the Kingswood Centre, Walsingham and Houghton Hall as well as to the immediate locality. These additional opportunities provide good enrichment and help to bring history and geography to life.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*Art and design, music and physical education were sampled. Design and technology was not inspected.*

78. There is clear evidence from displays and collections of pupils' work that **art and design** is well established in the school's curriculum. In Years 1 and 2 pupils use different media to fashion good self-portraits in paint, charcoal and pastel crayons. They study the work of different artists and use these as inspiration for their own work, such a delicately painted watercolour landscapes and seascapes based on a study of the Impressionists. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 extend work on portraits by studying the effects of aging and using photographs as a starting point for their own drawings and paintings. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have painted bold, colourful work inspired by the paintings of Paul Gauguin. They use their skills well to illustrate project work that covers many subjects. As part of a 'People in Action' topic, a professional artist, an ex-parent, visited the class of the older pupils to demonstrate techniques that gave the impression of movement in drawings. This expert input was valuable in enhancing pupils' skills.



79. It was not possible to see any lessons in **physical education** in the school but swimming at the local swimming pool was inspected. In the swimming lesson for pupils in Years 3 to 6, almost all pupils demonstrated skills that were well above those expected nationally. They responded to activities with sportsmanlike behaviour and eagerly worked to improve their skills. Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships contributed much to their learning and the amount of work that they covered. By the end of Year 6, all pupils successfully swim the nationally expected 25 metres unaided and the vast majority swim a good deal further with well developed techniques and styles.
80. A suitable range of activities is planned for pupils' physical education, covering all the required aspects of the subject. Teaching and learning were excellent in the lesson observed, taken by teaching assistants and parents under the expert guidance and supervision of the local pool instructor. Very high expectations were evident and all adults worked very effectively as a team so that not a minute was wasted either poolside or in the water. As a result, pupils made very good progress in a short space of time.
81. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and is particularly successful in facilitating teamwork, including teachers, support staff, parents and professional coaches. She ensures that a good range of additional activities, including football and cricket, is available to pupils to enhance the opportunities provided in the day-by-day lessons. She has recently entered the school into a county-based sports training programme, which will provide additional opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to learn hockey and short tennis. The biennial residential visit for the pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, provides good opportunities for all pupils, including the most talented, to undertake physical activities such as rock climbing, orienteering, caving, archery and fencing. The school hall and the outside hard and extensive grassed areas give satisfactory support to the curriculum.
82. **Music** was sampled by observation of lessons and listening to singing in assemblies. In the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 3 and 4, the standard of pupils' work was above the level expected nationally, which is an improvement since the last inspection. This, and the quality of singing in assemblies, indicates that pupils achieve well in music, particularly in singing. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement on the standards in Year 6. The outcomes in the standards of work indicate that the overall quality of teaching and learning is now good.
83. In the Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teaching of basic skills in learning to differentiate between long and short sounds prepared pupils well for a composition activity. The class teacher and teaching assistant worked well together to maintain a good level of involvement of all pupils and to ensure that those who needed it were given additional support to participate. In the Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils sang well with clear diction and good use of dynamics. The lesson prepared pupils satisfactorily for a school performance.
84. There has been good improvement in the school's planning, which was poor at the last inspection. There is now clear guidance for the systematic and progressive development of skills. The present co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject since the start of term and is currently evaluating provision. Her involvement in checking teaching and learning is informal at this stage. The school has recognised the need for more systematic monitoring to give a clear direction for further development.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

*Provision in this area was sampled.*

85. One excellent lesson was seen in Years 5 and 6. In this lesson, the subject of stealing in school, and the consequences for victims and the community, was handled skilfully and sensitively by the teacher. She made excellent use of pupils' work in literacy by selecting a passage which provided opportunities to explore a wide range of social issues and emotions.

She challenged pupils' thinking through the use of very good questioning strategies. She gave pupils the opportunity to share their responses with a partner. Pupils were incensed by the injustice suffered by the main character and empathised with her distress, prompting responses such as, 'It makes you want to cry, really, first being unjustly accused and then the relief when you are proved innocent.'

86. The school sees pupils' personal development as a pivotal part of its work. Its very caring atmosphere supports pupils' personal development well. The range of opportunities for personal, social and health education is good and includes work on diet, health, sex and relationships education, the dangers of drugs misuse and personal safety as well as emotional health and well-being.
87. The school helps pupils to develop a safe and healthy life-style, gain confidence and develop excellent relationships. Pupils' involvement with the school council provides a good opportunity for them to experience democracy at first hand and to feel valued as school citizens. Citizenship and a sense of responsibility are further developed through the good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for jobs around the school and to support the work of charities.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
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).*

