

INSPECTION REPORT

DALE HALL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124668

Headteacher: Mrs A Beckett

Lead inspector: Mrs A Pangbourne

Dates of inspection: 14th - 17th March 2005

Inspection number: 266714

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 426

School address: Dale Hall Lane
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Suffolk
Postcode: IP1 4LX

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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr M Reason

Date of previous inspection: February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dale Hall Community Primary School draws some of its pupils from the local area but a large proportion come from further afield. The socio-economic circumstances of most pupils are broadly average. Attainment on entry is broadly average but covers the full range of attainment. Most pupils are white-British and there are 20 pupils from ethnic minority heritages. Very few speak English as an additional language. There were 81 pupils with special educational needs (SEN), ranging from moderate learning difficulties to autism. Seven pupils had a statement of SEN, which is an average proportion. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is average. The school received a Healthy Schools Award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23818	Alison Pangbourne	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology
9561	Husain Akhtar	Lay inspector	
23300	Lily Evans	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Religious education Citizenship Music
23009	Anne Hogbin	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school and it gives good value for money. Children enter the school with standards that are broadly average, but cover the full range of attainment. By the time pupils leave, standards are above average. This represents good achievement for pupils. The quality of teaching is good. The school is well led and managed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children in the reception classes achieve very well because the quality of teaching is very good.
- Achievement is very good in speaking and listening because the school places strong emphasis on developing these skills.
- In Year 6, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should because some lessons lack challenge and give insufficient opportunities for independent learning.
- Assessment information is not used sufficiently in Years 3-6 to set individual targets that will move pupils to the next stage of their learning.
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good and, as a result, they show very good attitudes to their work and behave very well.
- Talented teaching assistants contribute very positively to the standards attained, and particularly to the good achievement of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- The way in which pupils are involved in the work of the school is very good.

Improvement since the last inspection six years ago is good. The school is more effective now. The school has maintained broadly above average standards but the nature of the school has changed with a much higher proportion of pupils with SEN and the attainments of children starting school are now lower. The quality of teaching has improved and there have been improvements in personal development, the curriculum and links with parents. There were no key issues to be addressed but minor points have been successfully addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is **good** overall. The table above is based on 'average points'. The National Curriculum level reached by each pupil is allotted a given number of points and these are averaged to give the above grades. The 2004 grade Cs for similar schools above are misleading because some of these pupils did exceptionally well at the end of Year 2,

reaching the standards expected for Year 6 pupils (Level 4). They were unable to gain as many 'value added' points because although they reached the maximum marks for Level 5 in the Year 6 tests they are not permitted to sit the Level 6 tests and so possibly gain more points. This year, standards in Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE). They are not as high as last year because there is a much higher proportion of pupils with SEN in the year group. Standards in Year 6 are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. They are average in RE. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. In Year 6, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should when lessons lack challenge and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves. Children in the reception classes are on course to reach above the goals expected by the end of the reception year in all the areas of learning where judgements could be made.

Pupils' personal qualities are **good** overall. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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

Teaching and learning are **good**. They are never less than good in the reception classes and in Years 1, 2 and 4. In the best lessons, interesting methods motivate the pupils to work hard and do their best. Teaching assistants provide very good quality support and teachers manage their pupils very well. Younger pupils work very well independently and in small groups. This is not always the case in Year 6, where most lessons were satisfactory. Here, teachers give too much information, some lessons are unstimulating and pupils have insufficient opportunities to find out for themselves. Satisfactory assessment procedures mean that tasks generally meet the needs of all pupils, including higher attainers and those with SEN. However, assessment information is not used enough in Years 3-6 to set individual targets to enable pupils to move on to the next stage of their learning.

The curriculum is good and it is enriched well by a good range of visits and visitors. Enrichment days and weeks contribute positively to learning in a range of subjects. The school provides well for pupils' pastoral needs and links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**.

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and show a strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils. Subject leaders have a good understanding of what needs to be done in their subjects. Effective monitoring procedures mean that the school has already identified the areas for improvement identified by the inspection team. The school contributes very well to teacher training. The governors fulfil their roles satisfactorily and are committed to the school. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the work of the school. They like the good induction procedures, the good progress their children make, the good teaching and that their children like coming

to school. Some would like more information about how their children are getting on. The inspection team agrees with their positive views but judges that they receive sufficient information. Pupils like everything about their school and would not want to change anything.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve achievement in Year 6.
- Use assessment information, particularly in Years 3-6, to raise standards further.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

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

Achievement is good overall. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls. Standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT and RE in Year 2. They are above average in speaking and listening. Standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT in Year 6. They are well above average in speaking and listening. They are average in RE.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well.
- Achievement is very good in speaking and listening because the school offers many opportunities to develop these skills.
- Achievement in Year 6, whilst satisfactory, is not as good as elsewhere in the school.
- Gifted and talented pupils and those with SEN achieve well.

Commentary

1. Most children enter the school with broadly average standards, but they cover the full range of attainment. There are significant differences between intakes. They achieve very well because of the very good teaching and the very good curriculum that is very well matched to their needs. As a result, they reach above the goals expected by the end of the reception year in all the areas of learning where judgements could be made.

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.4 (15.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The 2004 results for Year 2 were well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics and science. Standards are not as high this year because the current Year 2 were a lower attaining group on entry and there is a higher proportion of pupils with SEN than is typical for the school. Pupils do well because the quality of teaching is never less than good and often very good.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (28.0)	26.9 (26.8)

Mathematics	28.3 (27.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.8 (29.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Results in national tests last year were above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. The data suggests that pupils did not do as well as similar schools, but this is misleading because points are allocated according to the number of levels pupils progress. Some pupils had already reached the expected level for Year 6 (Level 4) when they were in Year 2. In Year 6, they received the maximum marks for the Level 5 tests but were unable to sit the Level 6 tests. As a result, the number of 'value added' points is not as high.
- Most pupils achieve well as they move through the school but progress stalls in Year 6, where tasks do not always provide sufficient challenge and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. This has a negative impact on standards and achievement. The school takes good care to ensure that gifted and talented pupils and those with SEN achieve well. These pupils are identified in teachers' plans and their needs are well met. Pupils with SEN do well because they are supported very well in lessons and time is used effectively to develop reading, writing and spelling skills each day. Gifted and talented pupils are also offered extra sessions, described elsewhere in this report, to develop their skills. Pupils do very well in speaking and listening because there are many opportunities for them to give presentations about research projects and to discuss their interpretations of texts.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their moral and social development is very good and spiritual and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively, overall.
- Pupils behave very well as a result of high expectations set by adults.
- Relationships are very good and respect for others is well developed.
- Pupils like the school and participate enthusiastically in all the available activities.

Commentary

- Most pupils concentrate very well in lessons and work very hard. They respond enthusiastically to responsibility, such as working as prefects, the playground squad and dinner helpers. Those who represent their fellows on the school council are proud of their role and keen to talk about it. Pupils readily participate in extra-curricular activities. Residential trips also contribute positively to their personal development. Children in the reception classes are on course to exceed the goals expected for their age in their personal development because the school places strong emphasis on the development of these skills.
- The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to think, reflect and appreciate nature. In RE, for example, pupils recognise the spiritual aspects and learn about faiths other than Christianity. Links with a local church further support spirituality. The school promotes its behaviour policy very effectively. This, along with teachers' very good management of pupils' behaviour, ensures that lessons run smoothly. Personal, social and health education is another area that enables pupils to appreciate right and wrong.

'Achievement' assemblies are good social and rewarding occasions. Pupils value rewards, some of which are instigated by the prefects for good behaviour. Respect for others' feelings is very well developed. Most pupils behave very sensibly and make good use of the playground. Any challenging behaviour is quickly noted and appropriately dealt with. Pupils respect the building and the learning resources. Exclusions are rare.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	406	2	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0

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

- Pupils work very well together in class and look after one another outside. Older pupils are prepared to support younger ones. Pupils have a clear idea of social responsibility and have a very good sense of a community. They help the school in reaching out to the community by visiting a home for elderly residents to sing, for example. Prefects take their role seriously and help in promoting a well ordered atmosphere in the school. Through the school council activities, pupils learn about democratic processes. Good use is made of extra-curricular activities and a variety of outside visits to enrich pupils' cultural experiences. Subjects like art, history and geography are effective in promoting pupils' cultural development. A teacher's educational visit to Ghana has provided opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. Different groups of pupils work and play together happily.
- The administrative staff take an active part in maintaining attendance records and following up absences. In concerning cases, the education welfare officer is appropriately used. Absences are mainly due to widespread sickness and a little because of authorised family holidays during the term times. Most pupils arrive on time in the morning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.3	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.1	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 is good. Good teaching enables all pupils to make good gains in their learning. The good curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of visits and visitors. Pupils are well cared for and they receive satisfactory support. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in the reception classes. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The way that teachers use interesting methods to motivate the pupils is good.
- Teaching assistants contribute very positively to the standards attained.
- Teachers manage pupils very well.
- In Year 6, lessons do not always challenge pupils sufficiently or enable them to work independently.
- In Years 3-6, teachers do not set individual targets to enable potential higher attainers to reach the next stage in their learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	14 (28%)	24 (48%)	10 (20%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

9. Many examples were seen during the inspection where teachers used exciting methods to keep the pupils' attention. This was particularly so in the reception classes and Years 1, 2 and 4, where teaching was never less than good. For example, in a very good English lesson in Year 1, the pupils developed their reading skills through alliteration and rhyme. While reading the story 'Kakadu Jack', the pupils learned not only to read text such as 'marvellous mangoes' and 'fabulous figs' but also recognised the fruits as the teaching assistant produced them from a bag. They were very keen to see what was coming next. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2, well prepared teaching assistants made a real difference to the standards attained in their groups as they helped them solve money problems. The way in which they made detailed observational notes about the pupils ensured their needs were met as any difficulties could be addressed. Teaching assistants for pupils in Years 1-2 are also well directed to work towards pupils reaching their targets for learning and behaviour. The excellent lesson seen for children in a reception class is described in the section about the Foundation Stage.
10. Although there were examples of good and very good teaching in the other year groups, much of the teaching in Year 6 was satisfactory, particularly in English, mathematics and science. One lesson, in RE, was unsatisfactory. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers tended to give too much information without giving the pupils the opportunity to become involved through paired discussion, for example. Unchallenging worksheets kept pupils busy but did little to stretch higher attainers fully. Consequently, achievement is satisfactory. In the unsatisfactory RE lesson, led by a supply teacher, pupils were offered a very low level colouring task that did little to extend their learning. This lesson had been planned by the class teacher.
11. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to respond to individual needs and help pupils understand how to improve are good in Years 1-2. Individual targets, displayed on tables, are meaningful and relevant in moving pupils forward to the next stages of learning. Ongoing assessment by teachers and teaching assistants is well used to meet the needs of all groups of pupils in lessons and enable them to achieve well.

12. In Years 3-6, despite areas of good practice, assessment information is not used precisely enough to set individual targets. From Year 3 upwards not all pupils who have the potential to become higher attainers are identified and set specific targets to ensure they reach the next stage in their learning. For example, pupils expected to reach the expected Level 4 in national tests do not know what they have to do to reach Level 5. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent in enabling pupils to progress in their thinking or learn from their mistakes. In the last year, the school has improved its assessment procedures, and is now storing data on the computer for easy reference. Many new initiatives, such as individual target setting and tracking representative pupils, have not been in place for long enough to impact positively on standards and achievement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. It provides good opportunities for pupils to widen their experiences through enrichment and extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources provided for pupils are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular enhancement events are promoting pupils' enthusiasm for learning well.
- Innovative programmes are changing how all pupils learn and provide well for pupils identified as gifted and talented.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- There is good provision for pupils with SEN.

Commentary

13. The curriculum provides several innovative programmes that affect teaching styles and promote greater creativity. Although these programmes have yet to be fully put into practice by all teachers, they are enabling the school to meet the needs and strengths of pupils. The curriculum is fully inclusive to all so that they achieve well and have very positive attitudes.
14. Since the last inspection the school has created a Foundation Stage outdoor activity area which enables the children to develop their physical and motor skills well. This contributes very positively to the very exciting curriculum that meets their needs very well. A wide variety of interesting and motivating activities are provided, both inside and outside, and these contribute positively to the standards attained.
15. Pupils with SEN have plans of work that are well targeted to meet their needs. There is appropriate advice from outside professionals and parents are as fully involved as they wish to be. Individual education plan targets are detailed about what pupils will attain, and are reviewed regularly. Pupils are very well supported by teaching assistants who know them well and record their achievements at the end of each lesson. They run additional programmes well and pupils' progress is well tracked and recorded. Pupils are mainly supported in class. On the occasions when they are withdrawn, care is taken to ensure that they do not miss out on lessons by fitting in short sessions at the beginning of the day and after lunch. Pupils identified as gifted and talented benefit from extension activities such as the 'Think Tank', described elsewhere in this report, which provides them with good challenge and meets their needs well.

16. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities outside of the school day. There is a wide variety of sports clubs and very good opportunities to join team games both within school and competitively with other schools. A good number of pupils take music lessons from peripatetic specialists who contribute positively to their musical knowledge and skills. Enhancement events are well planned for a week or a day at a time, and incorporate visits and visitors. Pupils' work on these days includes a good range of subjects; for example, Year 1 'World Day' focused learning on letters, addresses, stamps and three countries, with practice in letter writing, odd and even numbers, map reading, questioning, speaking and listening. Often these days are linked to history topics. A pleasant reading garden has been developed, and, within the school, the library and ICT areas enhance learning opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and support given to pupils are good. Systematic advice and guidance for pupils to improve their work are satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good arrangements for the pupils' welfare.
- Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place – vulnerable pupils are well looked after.
- Pupils are very well involved in the work of the school.

Commentary

17. All pupils benefit from the school's caring ethos and are warmly looked after. They trust their class teacher who provides the first point of pastoral contact and gives good care, guidance and support. Health and safety provision is good with several trained first aid staff and appropriate risk assessments. The medical room provides appropriate accommodation to rest pupils who are unwell. The headteacher, responsible for child protection, is knowledgeable in relevant matters and keeps others informed of issues. The personal, social and health education provides time for pupils to discuss and learn about matters related to their welfare, like the misuse of drugs. Relationships with other agencies are well used to ensure that individual problems are dealt with effectively. Professionals from the fire service, the police and the railway are regularly invited into school to talk to pupils about issues relevant to their well-being. Parents are rightly happy with the induction arrangements for new entrants and for pupils to transfer to secondary schools.
18. There is an effective system to compile statistical information about pupils' progress. However, the use of the data to systematically guide and advise them individually about what they need to do to reach their full potential, is developing and is satisfactory at present. There are good arrangements for monitoring the achievement of pupils with SEN. Exchange of pastoral information amongst staff provides an effective means of keeping pupils' personal development checked. This, along with the system of keeping records of concerns, provides a deterrent for any oppressive behaviour such as bullying.
19. The school is always ready to listen to pupils' views and there are many informal opportunities for them to become involved in the work of the school, while the school council provides more formal structures for pupils to contribute their ideas.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is good and effectively supports their children's learning. Links with the community and other schools are effective and helpfully enhance learning experiences for pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents trust the school and readily support their children's learning.
- Links with the wider community are productive.

Commentary

20. Most parents are pleased with the education their children are receiving. Regularity and variety of information keeps parents well updated on school life and what the school does and achieves. Overall, communications with parents are good, despite some parents expecting increased interaction with teachers. Reporting requirements are met.
21. Written reports to parents are good as they inform about what pupils have been doing and achieving. There are helpful meetings with parents to discuss pupils' progress. Parents of pupils with SEN are involved well in helping their children to reach the targets on their individual education plans. Outside advice is actively sought from specialists and other professionals. Parents show good support for parents' evenings, achievement assemblies, school events and fund raising by the parents' association. Many parents voluntarily help the school with its work. Curricular meetings are appreciated and well attended by parents.
22. Pupils' learning is enriched by visits, more for older pupils, to places of interest, business and worship. The local church is used well to enrich pupils' spirituality. Visitors, such as an artist in residence, also support the curriculum. Links with appropriate external agencies also support dental care and healthy eating initiatives. Links with the sports and performing arts organisations support the curriculum and help in developing pupils' related skills.
23. Close links with local schools in the area support arrangements for transition. The school makes good use of expertise at the partner secondary school to enrich areas of the curriculum such as science, with 'master classes' for higher attaining pupils. The school is productively involved with teacher training institutions and school, students and pupils benefit from this.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership. Management is good. Governance is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good monitoring and evaluation systems mean that the school has already identified the areas for improvement identified by the inspection team.

- There is a very strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils.
- Trainee teachers are very well supported and are included as members of the team.

Commentary

24. A positive feature that contributes to the good standards in many aspects of the school's work and the good achievement is the way that the school evaluates and reflects on its provision. An established system for monitoring means that areas for development are identified and addressed. For example, the school has looked at different early intervention programmes to raise standards in mathematics for lower attainers. These appear to be successful. The school is currently developing its assessment procedures to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in national tests. The headteacher regularly monitors teaching by visiting classes without warning the teachers first and this gives her a clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching across the school. There is also an established programme for the deputy headteacher and senior staff to fulfil their management roles. A good strategy is the way that subject leaders sometimes monitor teaching in pairs. This gives them a better understanding of teaching and provision for age groups with which they may be unfamiliar and contributes positively to the standards attained. The co-ordinator for SEN provides good leadership and monitors the success of intervention programmes well.
25. All staff show a commitment to the inclusion of all pupils, regardless of background or level of attainment. An example of this is the provision made for gifted and talented pupils. These pupils are clearly identified and teachers refer to them in their planning. A strong feature is the 'Think Tank' sessions. Here, six very able pupils from across Years 3-6 meet with the headteacher or deputy headteacher for two half hour sessions each week. In these sessions they undertake a variety of challenging projects, including computer presentations on current affairs and problem solving activities. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were very enthusiastic about this provision.
26. There is a very strong commitment to the development of trainee teachers. During the inspection, the two students on their placements contributed positively to the standards attained, supporting groups and leading discussions. Teachers say that it has helped them to reflect on their own practice.
27. Several governors are new and are becoming familiar with their roles and responsibilities. They undertake their role as 'critical friends' satisfactorily. The school manages its budget carefully to ensure the best quality of education for the pupils. A building project is due to begin very shortly to improve the accommodation.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	988738
Total expenditure	995626
Expenditure per pupil	2343

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	37603
Balance carried forward to the next	30715

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

28. The good quality of education has been further improved since the previous inspection. It is now very good. Children start school with broadly average standards but cover the full range of attainment. There are sometimes significant differences between different intakes of children. Overall, attainment on entry is lower now than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Children start school at the beginning of the term in which they have their fifth birthday and become full time almost immediately. At the time of the inspection, two intakes were in school in separate classes, with another due next term. The very good curriculum enables them to develop their skills through a wide range of exciting activities. The quality of teaching is very good in all the areas of learning and, as a result, children achieve very well. Most children are on course to reach above the goals expected by the end of the reception year in all the areas of learning where it was possible to make judgements. The Foundation Stage leader provides very good leadership and management.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children respond very well to the expectation that they will behave very well and take some responsibility for their own learning.
- There is very good emphasis on the development of these skills.
- Children work and play together very harmoniously.

Commentary

29. Children come into school happily and settle to an activity. They are encouraged to show that they have arrived by moving their name card onto a 'register' board. When it is time to sit with their teacher they willingly help to tidy up. Good manners are stressed and children are expected to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They take turns to be the helper of the day and undertake jobs around the classrooms. Very good behaviour was seen at all times and particularly when children walked through the school on a 'listening walk'. They were careful not to disturb other classes as they tiptoed down the corridors.
30. Numerous examples were seen where children worked and played with minimal supervision. A very good example was the 'carousel morning' where the children in both classes chose exciting activities from both classrooms. They took turns to ride on the 'magic carpet' and put on their coats and sat on chairs by the door ready to go to the outdoor area with the classroom assistant. Everyone knew that they would have a turn on the activities and knew how many were allowed at once because routines are so well established.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very exciting methods motivate the children to join in.
- There is a strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

31. Very good emphasis is placed on the development of language and literacy skills. For example, the youngest children developed their reading skills in an interesting way. The teacher had written 'Jack and the beanstalk' on the board but only the 'J' and 'b' were visible. The children were challenged to identify the words. Eventually 'and' and 'the' were identified and the children went on to offer sensible suggestions such as 'John and the big box'. 'Jack and the beanstalk' was revealed and this led into a very well chosen version of the story, where the children predicted the text. Very good questioning ensured that children learned that letter sounds, pictures and rhyme can help them to identify words.
32. Another example is the way that a student teacher encouraged children to develop their language and their imaginations by pretending to fly on a 'magic carpet'. Wind chimes set the scene for take off and children were encouraged to say what they could see through their binoculars. The student encouraged the children to use their imaginations, resulting in some amazing vocabulary. One higher attaining child said he could see a narwhal, describing it clearly! It is this emphasis on speaking and listening that contributes positively to standards further up the school.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on practical activities contributes positively to learning.
- Effective adult support means that the needs of all children are very well met.

Commentary

33. Children want to learn because activities are exciting and stimulating. For example, in a lesson to develop mathematical language, the older children made suggestions relating to the story of 'Rosie's Walk' before working in groups with an adult. Some children worked with the teacher, finding interesting items like glass beads to put in positions, such as beside a shell. Other children worked with the student, putting plastic animals on a farm map and others worked outside with the teaching assistant who hid objects for the children to find. This small group support meant that each child was able to develop mathematical language according to their needs. During the 'carousel morning' children worked with a parent helper to make holiday booking forms, developing their understanding of money as she talked to them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use their senses very well to learn about the world around them.
- Tasks are very well planned to challenge all children.

Commentary

34. The quality and variety of child-initiated and teacher-led activities mean that children learn about the world in which they live very well. During the inspection, children went on a 'listening walk'. They were very well prepared, having predicted what they might hear beforehand. The teacher drew symbols so they could check on their return. They walked around the school, listening quietly at various well chosen spots. The teacher asked challenging questions to extend their learning. For example, a high attaining child said she could hear the dinner ladies putting knives and forks away. The teacher asked how she knew they were knives and forks and she said it was because it sounded like metal. The children learned that voices heard in the library differ from those heard in the hall. The walk continued outside with very good timing ensuring that a train was passing! Having listened to bird song, traffic and the train going into the tunnel, the children returned to the classroom to check their predictions and discuss which sounds were made by people.
35. Children use computers and learn how to use the 'mouse' efficiently. During the 'carousel morning' they used a remote control device to send a duck around a route, showing a good understanding of direction. Other well planned activities include making sandwiches and discussing the taste of different breads and fillings. All these interesting activities contribute positively to the standards attained.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are very well structured to challenge all children.
- Adults join in with physical activities to make them fun for the children.

Commentary

36. An excellent lesson was seen during the inspection. Here, the children walked sensibly through the school to the 'Dome', which was once an indoor swimming pool. This dome-shaped hall provided an ideal setting for interpreting the story of 'Jack and the beanstalk' through movement. The teacher told the story very expressively, with the children following her excellent example as she moved round the room. There was a real sense of awe and wonder as children climbed through hoops held by the teacher as if they were climbing through the clouds. The teaching assistant called out that Jack had seen a castle and the children gasped in wonder as they tiptoed towards her. The way that the teacher linked the story to movement, picking up every opportunity for movement and language development was outstanding. As a result, the children could hardly wait to see what was coming next.

37. In the outdoor area, children developed their physical skills, as the teaching assistant lead their play as police motorcyclists responding to accidents. The way that she joined in with them motivated them and increased their enjoyment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

38. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning, but children were observed clapping in time to music and singing in tune. They were also seen making models, choosing their own materials. Work on display covered a wide range of media such as free painting, printing, bear collages, dragon puppets and three-dimensional paper collages.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6 and pupils achieve well overall.
- Achievement in Year 6 is not as good as elsewhere in the school.
- Assessment information is not used sufficiently to set individual targets that will move pupils on to the next stage of their learning in Years 3-6.
- All pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening skills because the teachers promote these skills very well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and the subject is well led and managed.
- Language and literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum.

Commentary

39. Standards in Year 6 are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection and have been maintained each year, keeping abreast of national trends. In Year 2, standards are average this year, a drop since last year. This is because many of the current cohort, who are making good progress, came into school with below average skills and a high proportion of pupils have SEN. Pupils do very well in speaking and listening because there is a strong culture of promoting pupils' confidence and valuing their contributions. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have time to answer, explain their thoughts and express their feelings. An example of this was in a RE lesson when Year 2 pupils talked about how they feel when they have helped someone or been unkind to someone. Group reading is used effectively to discuss interpretations of texts and, in Years 5 and 6, pupils present research projects and prepare talks about themselves. Improvement is good because the balance of the curriculum has been addressed well.
40. Boys and girls are well motivated to read and write because texts and writing topics are appealing to both genders. Pupils with SEN achieve well, supported very well by well-informed teaching assistants. Provision for reading and spelling programmes is effective in providing the support needed for pupils with learning difficulties to make good progress. In lessons where teaching is less successful reading texts are too challenging for pupils with SEN because teachers fail to use available reading ages to match them to the reading levels of the pupils. Action to challenge higher attainers is effective but inconsistent, particularly in Year 6 where progress in writing skills is satisfactory. Here, there is too little independence, paired and group work and challenge. Learning targets for writing are often inappropriate and leave pupils with no clear direction to improve their work, for example in the use of interesting vocabulary and in ensuring accuracy of punctuation and use of capital letters. In Year 3, where class numbers are higher than in other year groups, pupils benefit from full-time teaching assistants in their classes, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged in their learning. Throughout the school, good handwriting skills are well promoted, which is evident in their neat presentation.
41. Where teaching is consistently successful in Years 1 and 2, planning, pace, the match of tasks and learning targets are all clear so that pupils are very aware of their own

progress and what they need to learn next. Where teaching is less successful, there is some lack of challenge for higher attainers and the lessons lack pace, which slows progress and results in lacklustre work. Throughout the school, spelling is well taught and pupils make good use of personal spelling books and dictionaries within lessons. Their best writing is linked to their learning experiences, such as the poems by Year 4 about snow, and Year 6 pupils writing diaries as evacuees from World War 2 after meeting and talking with someone about their experience. Pupils use the Internet for researching topics for word processing their writing.

42. Planning for English is good and the subject is well led because priorities for action such as spelling have been tackled well and the next areas for development are clearly identified through planning. Initiatives such as target setting have yet to be put into good practice in Years 3-6 and, therefore, are not impacting as positively on teaching and learning as they do in Years 1-2.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

43. The very good quality displays in school show the importance of developing vocabulary well in subjects such as science, history and geography. Writing for history is particularly valuable as it often forms the inspiration for writing diaries, biographies and fictional accounts. Following scientific study of the earth and beyond, pupils chose an aspect of space to research, read and write about for personal projects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well.
- Not all potentially above average pupils are being identified and set appropriate targets.
- Tasks are not always sufficiently challenging for pupils in Year 6.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' progress.
- The subject leader provides good leadership and has a clear vision of how to move the subject forward.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons.

Commentary

44. Pupils' achievement is good from Years 1-5 and they attain standards that are above average by Year 6. The school's programme for supporting lower attaining pupils through booster groups and providing extra teaching assistants has effectively raised the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 (the expected level for Year 6 pupils). However, the percentage of pupils attaining at a higher level is below that found in similar schools as methods for tracking progress and setting targets are not yet sufficiently refined to identify which average pupils could do better. Standards are average in Year 2, where there is a larger number of pupils than usual with SEN.
45. Teaching, learning and achievement have improved since the previous inspection. Very good teaching was seen in Years 1, 2 and in the subject leader's Year 3 class, where interesting practical methods and a fast pace to learning captured pupils' interest and resulted in very good achievement. In these classes, work was matched

closely to pupils' needs, in contrast with some classes higher in the school, notably Year 6, where there is still too much tendency to use worksheets or text books that are not adapted sufficiently to match the needs of the particular groups of pupils who use them, which hampers their learning. Achievement here is satisfactory.

46. Teachers place strong emphasis on asking pupils to explain their thinking and the processes they have used to solve problems. The very good relationships teachers have with their classes enables pupils to be confident in explaining how they have reached an answer or where they have difficulty in understanding. Teachers use their well trained teaching assistants very effectively to support their lower groups and SEN pupils during lessons. Teachers expect high standards of behaviour. Pupils respond very well and are keen to learn, concentrate very well and work together co-operatively in pairs, which contributes positively to standards and achievement. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent in enabling pupils to progress in their thinking or learn from their mistakes.
47. The subject leader is a good role model both as a teacher and as a subject specialist, bringing insight from her fact finding visits abroad, mathematical research and attendance at national events, which is improving provision within the school. She has made a perceptive analysis of the subject's strengths and weaknesses through analysing test results and monitoring classroom practice. The use of ICT within mathematics is insufficiently developed for pupils to use it as a natural tool in their learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. The subject is developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. There is a strong link with geography. Pupils use co-ordinates when reading maps, put negative numbers in context whilst studying the weather and create computer databases about depth and flow of the stream during their river topic. They gain a good understanding of 2D shape during art when using a computer program to generate pictures in the style of 'The Snail' by Matisse. However, links with other subjects are incidental rather than explicitly planned to support mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6 and pupils achieve well from Years 1-5.
- Achievement in Year 6, whilst satisfactory, is not as good as it should be.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.
- Assessment information is not used sufficiently to set targets for individual pupils that will move them on to the next stage of their learning.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves.
- The subject leader provides good leadership.

Commentary

49. Standards are average in Year 2. They are not as high as those identified in the previous inspection, but this year group has a high proportion of pupils with SEN.

Standards in Year 6 are similar to those identified in the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 6 could do better, but their progress is impeded because tasks are not as tightly matched to their needs as they should be and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, in a lesson about reversible and irreversible changes, all the pupils had the same worksheet and there were no opportunities for them to discuss what they already knew because the teacher talked for too long. Opportunities for them to share their thoughts on the investigation were missed. The way in which the pupils recorded the results of their investigation was very prescriptive.

50. Elsewhere in the school, pupils do well because of the good quality of the teaching and the emphasis on investigative activities. Teachers manage their pupils very well and teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the standards attained. For example, in Year 2, an exciting letter from 'Professor Intrepid' inspired pupils to find out how to test which part of the classroom was the warmest. The teacher and teaching assistants worked together with the pupils to place ice cubes in various locations to find out which would melt first. In Year 5, the pupils showed well developed personal skills in the way that they organised their groups to investigate which materials are soundproof. Very good support from the teaching assistant meant that pupils with SEN could take part in the lesson. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 1, very good organisation meant that pupils could find out which materials are waterproof. The pupils were fascinated to see water disappear as the teacher poured it into a hole in a sand tray. They quickly learned the need for a pond liner and were keen to test the materials to find the best one. This emphasis on learning through first-hand experience contributes positively to the standards attained.
51. The subject leader has identified that more pupils should reach the higher Level 5 in national tests and has arranged staff meetings with the High School to raise teachers' awareness. However, assessment procedures have not yet been developed in Years 3-6 to identify which pupils are on the borderline of reaching Level 5 and to set them targets to help them attain that level.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well and attain above average standards in Year 6. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.
- The recent investment in ICT is having a positive effect on raising standards.
- The outdated classroom computers and printers restrict their use as a tool for learning.
- The good subject leader is managing the introduction of new resources effectively to ensure minimum disruption to learning.

Commentary

52. Standards are average in Year 2 and pupils are developing their skills well as they move through the school. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils very confidently combined a range of text, pictures and sound to make individual presentations connected with their history topic, showing a depth of knowledge and understanding of

a wide range of computer and Internet functions and demonstrating advanced keyboard and programming skills.

53. Teachers are making good use of the newly installed programs. Teachers' levels of expertise have improved since the last inspection and they are now more confident in teaching ICT. They use the new digital projector well to display information on a screen to demonstrate activities for the lesson and this helps pupils settle with understanding to their work. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to give assistance to lower attaining pupils to enable them to be successful.
54. The ICT suite is timetabled to allow all classes at least a one hour session each week and despite a short break whilst new software is being installed on newly acquired machines the quality of teaching and learning has remained high. However the facility is underused and there are many hours each day when it stands empty. Classroom computers and software are old, unreliable and incompatible with the new suite resources, which restricts its use and hampers pupils' achievement in using ICT as an integrated part of their daily learning.
55. The new subject leader has secured sizeable national funding with a telecoms company to involve the school in making a multimedia program to demonstrate citizenship. This is involving Years 3 and 6 in some exciting work. He has very good knowledge, which enables him to both help teachers with technical difficulties and identify ways to raise standards further during the introduction of new machines and software.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. There is effective use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum. There were many examples of ICT being used to enhance learning in literacy, numeracy, science, art, geography and history. For example, databases in mathematics and science and to support field trips in geography.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. History and geography were sampled.

57. In **history**, good quality displays show that pupils have interesting and varied experiences within topics. Theme days are a regular feature, where pupils dress as citizens and take part in a wide range of activities to give them a greater appreciation of the era they are studying. Teachers link history meaningfully with other subjects and extend pupils' knowledge well through visits and visitors. For example, Year 6 pupils made a multimedia presentation about World War 2 in ICT, an evacuee gave a first hand account, and pupils visited the Imperial War Museum at Duxford. A very good lesson was seen in Year 6 where pupils made deductions from photographic evidence of how the war changed the role of women. Teachers do not always ensure information texts in books and worksheets are simple enough for the weaker readers in Years 3-6, which hampers their achievement.
58. In **geography**, pupils in Year 3 learn about life in Ghana, whilst Year 2 pupils compare their own area with an imaginary Scottish Island in a storybook. Pupils use library books and information from the Internet to extend their knowledge and develop good

map-work skills connected with their topic work. Visits within the locality and to Felixstowe extend classroom learning effectively.

Religious education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good in Year 2.
- There are good opportunities in most lessons for reflecting, talking, explaining and sharing experiences.
- Year 6 pupils have too little challenge in their work.

Commentary

59. Standards are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and Year 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. In Years 3-6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with lessons seen ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. For example, in the unsatisfactory lesson for pupils in Year 6, following a successful visit from a vicar talking about the significance and symbolism of colours used within the church year, pupils had low-level challenge in a follow-up lesson. Evidence from samples of work suggests this is often the case and this adversely affects achievement, which is broadly satisfactory. Pupils have appropriate knowledge of the symbols of different religions and an awareness of how symbols are used in a secular way. In Years 1, 2, and 4 pupils are reflective in their learning. Jehovah's Witness pupils, included with the rest of the class, explain what the term 'angel' means in their religion, compared to in Christianity.
60. A strong feature of lessons with younger pupils is the use of models to retell the parables. Teachers used discussion very well to encourage reflection of the story and to relate that to their own experiences. In a Year 2 class, pupils contributed such comments as 'When I help my mum, I am like the Samaritan, but when I am unkind to my sister, I am like the priest'. There are visits to local churches and visits from representatives of different religions. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory because the monitoring of standards of work is underdeveloped.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology and music were sampled. Physical education was not inspected.

61. Work on display and in photographs in **art and design** shows that pupils develop their skills well and use a range of media as they move through the school. In Year 1, pupils experiment with primary colours creating tonal patterns. They make patterns using tape to mask parts of their designs and make collages of metal monsters using a range of media. In Year 2, they produce paintings inspired by Aboriginal art and drawings of the school community. By Year 3, they produce attractive paintings in the style of cave paintings and make Celtic designs. In Year 4, they use the work of Paul Klee as an inspiration and use pastels in the style of Monet. In Year 5, they use a piece of fabric and extend the pattern and use pastels to draw Greek urns. In Year 6, they develop their observational drawing skills through fruit and flowers. They have a good understanding of tone and pattern.
62. **Design and technology** has a high profile in the school. Work on display and in photographs shows that pupils in Year 1 make paper models of Stephenson's 'Rocket' and make islands from a variety of materials. In Year 2, the topic about Islands is well illustrated by the vehicles and shelters that have been designed and made by the pupils. In Year 3, pupils design, make and evaluate Celtic gift boxes. In Year 4, they make Christmas biscuits and design and make torches. In Year 5, pupils make attractive purses and moving toys. By Year 6, pupils design, make and evaluate shelters, finger snacks and wall hangings. All samples seen were of good quality.
63. In the lessons observed in **music**, non-specialist teachers used the scheme of work to plan good opportunities for listening, creating music and working co-operatively. In order to help pupils listen to their playing, teachers used the outside field space effectively. Pupils worked hard to improve their musical creations by listening carefully to the sound and critically evaluating it. The subject promotes pupils' pleasure in listening to music well and it is used effectively in some classroom situations for quiet working and in assembly. Year 5, pupils worked well in groups to create 'space' music using their choices of instruments for elements such as dust, aliens and the sun. This links well to individuals' research projects. Pupils sing in rounds in Year 2, and in Year 3 and Year 6 they rehearse hymns for their Easter performance in unison. The choir, taken by the specialist music teacher, practises singing in four parts. In assembly, the quality of singing is good and most pupils participate. Year 2 and Year 3 pupils create short musical scores and Year 3 play them together. A significant number of pupils take up opportunities for brass, woodwind and string instrument lessons from peripatetic teachers and care is taken to catch up on any work that is missed during these times.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

64. The school meets statutory requirements for sex and relationships education and drug education. The caring ethos of the school and the very good attitudes of the pupils show that personal development is very well supported. The subject is timetabled and the whole school is involved in healthy eating and keeping fit. Younger pupils have fruit and vegetables at break times and there is an extensive programme of games opportunities outside of the school day. Pupils know about the importance of

composting and, using the compost they have made, help to care for parts of the school grounds.

65. The school values pupils' opinions and recently consulted them on preferred teaching styles. School council, prefects, buddies and dinner helpers have important responsibilities and give pupils a voice in the running of their school. There is an effective 'Playground Squad' in Years 1 and 2 that take responsibility for difficulties that pupils may have in making friends. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to discuss, and be aware of, issues of importance to their personal safety. In Year 6, pupils compare and contrast the lives of children in Siberia with their own lives. In their home community, pupils are involved in entertaining elderly citizens and take part in local festivals.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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