

INSPECTION REPORT

ELM TREE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lowestoft

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124642

Headteacher: Mr P Norris

Lead inspector: Mr G Bassett

Dates of inspection: 8th - 10th November 2004

Inspection number: 266790

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:	5 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	274
School address:	Ranworth Avenue Lowestoft Suffolk
Postcode:	NR33 9HN
Telephone number:	(01502) 562 930
Fax number:	(01502) 515 769
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Legind
Date of previous inspection:	28 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Elm Tree Community Primary School is situated in Lowestoft, an area recognised by the European Community as an area of rural deprivation. It serves a well-established area immediately around the school but admits most of its children from rented and housing association housing from further afield. Children from a large part of north Suffolk also attend the speech and language unit and a hearing impairment unit within the school. At present, there are ten classes in the school and 274 pupils on roll, nearly all of white ethnic origin. There is an almost equal number of boys and girls. There is no pupil with the learning of English in the early stages as an additional language. Twenty-seven pupils have joined the school and 21 have left during the past two years. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs (SEN) - mainly moderate learning difficulties - is broadly in line with the national average, although the proportion with statements is well above the national average. The children join the school full time at the beginning of the term in which they become five but some have not previously attended local playgroups. Children who become five during the spring and summer terms attend part time until the beginning of the term they become five. The school's assessments show that the attainment on entry into the Reception class covers a wide range of ability but is average, overall. The school has recently been awarded the Investors in People award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21500	Mr G Bassett	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Foundation Stage
8992	Mr J Vischer	Lay inspector	Personal, social and health education
22990	Mr C Furniss	Team inspector	English Religious education History Geography
17756	Mrs H Monaghan	Team inspector	Science Physical education Design and technology
15600	Mr C Richardson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The leadership and management of the school are good. The quality of teaching is good and often very good, enabling the pupils to achieve well, and consequently standards in Years 1, 2 and 3 in English and mathematics have improved significantly and are above the expected standards. Standards in Year 4 in mathematics are also above the expected levels. All the staff are committed to providing a caring environment for all the pupils so that they make good progress and do as well as they can. The pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. The pupils in the special educational needs (SEN) units for language and communication and hearing impairment achieve very well. The parents express positive views about the quality of education provided by the school. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils achieve well, especially in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics, with attainment in Years 1, 2 and 3 being above the expected levels for their ages.
- The standards in science and information and communication technology are below the expected levels at the end of Year 4.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good, especially in the Foundation Stage and in the SEN units for speech and language and hearing impairment.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and governance of the school are good.
- The curriculum is good overall and support for learning outside lessons is very good.
- The teaching assistants provide very good support.
- The commitment to inclusion of all pupils is very good.
- The pupils' attitudes and relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The information provided to the parents about the school and their children's progress is very good.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school has dealt well with the issues raised at the last inspection. The quality of education has improved overall and teaching has improved significantly. A structured approach to reading has been put into place and the quality of planning for reading, writing and mathematics is now good, and this has led to a significant improvement in standards. The leadership and management of the school have improved, with the co-ordinators now taking a more skilful role in monitoring and developing what is happening in their subjects. The role of the governing body has been improved. The end of year assessments in English and mathematics are now good. Good improvements have been made to the provision made for the pupils with SEN and also in the Foundation Stage. The school is well placed to continue the improvements made.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils' achievement is good overall. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and are on course to achieve the goals children are expected to reach in their Reception Year well before the end of Reception. The standards in the most recent national tests in 2004 by the end of Year 2 are average in reading and well above average in writing and in mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher Level 3 is above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. The comparison with schools of a similar type shows a marked improvement, with the school's performance being identified as very high and in the top five per cent in writing and well above average in reading and mathematics. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. The varying number of pupils in the school's SEN units each year makes the national comparisons unreliable and this is evident in the drop in performance in 2003 when the proportion of pupils with SEN in Year 2 was higher.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	D	C	A
writing	B	C	A	A*
mathematics	A	C	A	A

Key: A – very high; A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.*

An analysis of the pupils' work shows that currently in Years 1 and 2 the standards are above the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics and their achievements are good overall. The pupils' standards in Year 3 are above the expected levels in English and mathematics and in Year 4 above the expected levels in mathematics and in line in English. In science and ICT, the standards by the end of Year 4 are below the expected levels and throughout the rest of the school are not as high as would be expected, bearing in mind the better standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In religious education throughout the school, the pupils' standards match the expected requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils with SEN and those in the two SEN units achieve very well. **The pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Their attitudes towards their work are very good and their behaviour is good. Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and often very good, especially in the Foundation Stage and in both SEN units. The curriculum is good and well planned by the teachers. Nearly three quarters of the lessons seen during the inspection were good or better but two lessons in science were unsatisfactory. The teachers' planning of the curriculum is good and has improved since the last inspection with the use of the national guidelines. The teachers use effective teaching methods and have high expectations for the pupils' achievements. There are good arrangements at the end of each term to formally assess what each pupil can do in English and mathematics. There are whole year group records kept for recording assessments in the other subjects. The accommodation is good overall, with work areas alongside each year group used effectively. However, the accommodation for the pupils in the speech and language unit is unsatisfactory. The links

with parents are good and those with the community and other schools are good. The school looks after its pupils well and listens to their views carefully.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership and management by the headteacher are good. The governance of the school is good and all statutory requirements are met. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the future developments and is developing good management strategies. He has established a very good commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in whatever the school plans. The subject leaders are providing effective leadership to the development of their subjects, especially when their subject becomes a main focus for development. The teaching assistants are deployed well throughout the school and give very good support. The leadership of the Foundation Stage and the SEN units is very good. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and regularly visit to help and support the staff and pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The partnership with the parents is good. The parents have very positive views about the quality of education and care provided by the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and take their responsibilities very positively.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise the pupils' standards in science and ICT.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The pupils' achievements throughout the main school are good and in the SEN speech and language and hearing impairment units are very good. Currently, the pupils in Year 2 attain standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above the expected levels. The pupils in Year 4 attain standards that are in line with the expected levels in English and above the expected levels in mathematics. However, although they have achieved well since Year 2, when standards were well below average, these pupils' standards are still below the expected levels for their age in science and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Currently, the pupils' standards in Year 2 are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 is better than the national trend.
- The children in the Foundation Stage enter school with attainment broadly in line with the expected levels for their age but they achieve well and nearly all are on course to reach the goals expected well before they enter Year 1.
- The pupils' standards of work in information and communication technology and in science in Year 4 are below the expected levels and in Year 2 the standards do not match the standards they reach in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The pupils in the speech and language and hearing impairment units, as well as those with SEN in the main school, achieve very well.

Commentary

1. In the national tests in 2004, the results show that the standards at the end of Year 2 were average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. Nearly all the pupils reached the expected Level 2 or above in the three areas and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. These results show a significant improvement over the results of the past few years and also since the last inspection. The teachers' assessment for science shows that standards are broadly average. This is also a marked improvement, as the school's performance has been below average and often well below average for several years. As the pupils over the last four years have entered school in Reception Year with attainment broadly in line with the expected levels, it is evident that they have achieved well overall, especially in developing their skills in writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. The long-term trend shows that the school's performance in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years exceeds the national trend for pupils at the end of Year 2. When compared with similar schools, the results of the most recent national tests show that standards are well above average in reading and mathematics and very high and in the top five per cent nationally in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (14.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.7 (14.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.3 (16.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Attainment on entry to the school in the Foundation Stage varies from child to child but, overall, their standards are in line with the expected levels for their age. They make good progress and achieve well while in the Reception class. The children begin school full time at different times during the school year, having attended part time prior to the beginning of the term in which they become five. By the beginning of the summer term, all children attend fulltime. Currently, all the children, including those who attend part time, have settled quickly to the routines of the class and school and they achieved well in the lessons observed. It is evident, from the very good quality of teaching and the assessment records already completed, that nearly all are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning well before the time they enter Year 1.
3. Currently, the achievement of the pupils in Year 2 is good because of the overall good quality of teaching. From the work seen and the lessons observed, it is evident that their standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects the special attention paid to raising the profile of reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. The pupils' standards in science and in ICT are broadly in line with the expected levels for their age but these are still too low when compared with

the much better standards being attained in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils' standards in Year 4 are in line with the expected levels in English and above what is expected in mathematics. However, in science, they are still not attaining the standards expected nationally for pupils of their age, even though they have shown significant improvements and achieved well since they were in Year 2. From the scrutiny of the pupils' work stored on the computers and following discussions with some pupils, it is evident that the standards in Year 4 in ICT are below expectations.

4. In religious education throughout the school, the pupils' standards match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for their ages. The standards in physical education are broadly in line with expected levels across the school. The analysis of the pupils' work since September indicates that the pupils are working conscientiously and are achieving well and making good progress.
5. The pupils identified as having special educational needs and those in the SEN units achieve very well to complete their individual learning targets.
6. The pupils with speech and language difficulties and pupils with hearing impairment in the SEN units achieve very well in English and mathematics. Although some pupils enter the speech and language unit with communication skills more than three years below their non-verbal abilities, all make very good progress. Most pupils are only achieving at the Performance (P) levels (small learning steps below the expected Level 1) in reading and writing; however, several are attaining at national expectations for their age in mathematics.
7. The pupils with SEN in the main school achieve very well and, although their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are often below the levels expected for their ages, they do as well as they can.
8. It is not possible to make judgements about the standards reached in art and design, design and technology, history, geography or music because too few lessons were seen during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and pupils are very self-confident
- The pupils in the SEN units respond very well to the caring ethos.
- The pupils respect the feelings and values of others very well.

Commentary

9. Throughout the school, the pupils' very good attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection. The children in the Foundation Stage are all on course to reach the goals expected of them in the development of their personal and social skills well before they enter Year 1. All pupils spoken to were positive about the school. In most

lessons, pupils are keen to learn and behave well. However, in a few lessons where the learning objectives are not clear, then attitudes can deteriorate - some pupils' desire to learn dissipates and this leads to immature behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are particularly good and this leads to a happy atmosphere where the sense of community is well developed. The pupils are also very self-confident and willing to greet adults and engage them in conversation. Their confidence is in part generated by the awareness they have about their own learning needs and this is developed well by the school through its emphasis on target setting. The school also takes many opportunities to develop pupils' self-esteem through a consistent and highly visible rewards system which gives them a good sense of their achievements.

10. The pupils' personal qualities are also very effectively developed through the ethos of respect for others' feelings and values which is very much an intrinsic part of the inclusive spirit that pervades the school. This is done partially by the staff acting as good role models for pupils and significantly by the presence of the speech and language and hearing impairment units, whose pupils, having obvious needs beyond those in the mainstream school, are well included by their peers when they are in their classes and in the playground. This they do with patience and good humour nearly all of the time.
11. The pupils in the speech and language unit and those in the hearing impairment unit enjoy their learning and have very good relationships with teachers and non-teaching staff. The pupils' self-confidence and esteem is generally low on entry to the provision but all the staff effectively improve and stimulate in the pupils a desire to learn. The pupils respond very well to the caring ethos, they enjoy coming to school and feel secure. The pupils have good relationships with their peers both in the provision and in mainstream.
12. The pupils' "playground friends' scheme is very well organised. A rota is in place so that all Year 4 pupils have a turn to help. A weekly review meeting with a member of staff gives pupils a good opportunity to improve their role. Pupils spoken to were very positive about their responsibilities.
13. Behaviour remains good in and around the school and in most lessons. However, some bullying does happen occasionally in spite of the very positive culture in the school to promote the pupils' self-esteem. However, pupils are particularly positive about going up to a member of staff when they feel aggrieved. This means that situations are well controlled by the school and incidents are not allowed to develop into serious situations. Again, it is the very positive relationships that come into play because the school gives serious consideration to any allegations of misconduct and all the staff listen to pupils' complaints as a matter of course. In the busy playgrounds, behaviour can sometimes be over-exuberant, leading to collisions and minor accidents. There have been no exclusions in 2003.
14. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by the school, together with good relationships. Opportunities for spiritual development are not planned sufficiently well in lessons but staff make a point of exploring opportunities when they occur. For example, in geography, the very special nature of

the place and its history is an emphasis when Oulton Broad is being studied. Moments of reflection in assemblies are considered well and not rushed. The social aspects of living in a community are well developed but a procedure to enable the pupils to take part in a school council is still at an early stage. Both cultural and multicultural developments are extended well through the wide range of visits and visitors to the school. Other customs and traditions are covered well in lessons and religious festivals are covered in religious education lessons and in assemblies.

Attendance

15. Attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average. The school does not operate a formal award system to encourage pupils to attend, although the local schools operate an annual one hundred per cent award scheme. Parents make good efforts to get their children to school on time. The school monitors attendance satisfactorily. Punctuality is good and lessons begin promptly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)2003 / 2004

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.1
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 overall and very good in the Foundation Stage and the SEN units. The teaching is good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage and in the SEN units. The curriculum is good and well planned but there are some weaknesses in the coverage of topics in science and ICT. The school looks after its pupils well and listens to their views carefully.

The accommodation is good overall but for the pupils in the language and communications unit it is unsatisfactory. The links with parents are good and those with the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall with nearly three quarters of all lessons seen being very good or better; as a consequence, the pupils learn well. The quality of assessment procedures is very good in the Foundation Stage, and in the SEN units and throughout the rest of the school it is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning in English and mathematics is good.
- The teachers use a good range of techniques for teaching.
- Assessment data is analysed and used well in the teachers' planning.
- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good overall.

- The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and included.
- The planning and teaching of science is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

16. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and there are many examples of very good teaching across the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection because the whole-school focus on developing effective teaching strategies in order to raise standards in English and mathematics has been successful. The teachers prepared lessons well, making them relevant to the pupils' lives and experience, and there was a good balance between teacher-directed learning and pupils learning independently so that they had maximum opportunities to produce work of good quality. The pupils are very well managed and there is a good balance between individual, group and whole-class activities. The pupils are engaged and interested and in their lessons there is an atmosphere of confidence, enthusiasm and shared enjoyment. The good use of interactive whiteboards in each classroom creates imaginative approaches to teaching. Careful planning and techniques such as *"mind mapping"* (a technique which can be used to discover what children already know) ensure that teaching is relevant to pupils' lives and builds on what they already know. All teachers identify learning objectives for each lesson, explain these to the pupils and most refer to them when marking pupils' work. This, together with the current focus on teaching thinking skills across the school, is giving the pupils a better understanding of their learning. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly and the quality of marking is good overall because it is analytical and the pupils are given time to correct their work. However, there are occasions when the teachers' comments are too general and consequently the pupils are not sure how they can improve.
17. In the two lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory, the work was not sufficiently challenging for all pupils, which led to a lack of application to the tasks set. Time was not used productively, as pupils sometimes completed practical tasks very quickly and others failed to complete lengthy written records.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (4%)	18 (34 %)	18 (34 %)	13 (24%)	2 (4%)	0 (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.

18. The last inspection identified the need to improve the use of assessment and to raise the quality of pupils' work. This has been a main focus for development and now the assessment procedures are very good and the results are used well to plan lessons. Results are checked and reviewed by all teachers and changes to the teaching programme are made if necessary. This has been responsible for the rise in standards in reading, writing and mathematics over the past two years.
19. The quality of teaching and learning education provided by the Foundation Stage has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. The quality of teaching and the planning for all areas of learning is now at least very good because of the very good leadership provided by the co-ordinator. The activities are

appropriately balanced between teacher directed and child-initiated. The conscientiousness of the very close teamwork is reflected in the many imaginative opportunities that are provided to develop the children's skills. The younger pupils in the two SEN units are fully integrated in the activities planned in the Reception classes for creative subjects and sometimes numeracy and literacy. The teaching assistant is very well prepared and gives excellent support to all children, often working with a small group.

20. The teaching and learning are very good throughout the two SEN units. Both the teacher for pupils with speech and language difficulties and the teacher for pupils with hearing impairment are very experienced and dedicated. They know their pupils very well and maintain very good assessments of their learning. In the lessons seen, the pupils were motivated and stimulated and were skilfully guided by very good direct questioning. The pupils included in mainstream lessons are very well supported by the teachers and support assistants. For example, in a music lesson, a hearing impaired pupil was fully included by the very good support given by the teacher through the use of the hearing impaired signing to ensure that the pupil understood instructions and the objectives for the lesson.
21. British Sign Language (BSL) and Sign Supported English (SSE) are both used effectively by staff to reinforce teaching points and to aid communication both within the units and mainstream classes. Speech and language therapists (SaLT) provide very good support overall to individual pupils for communication skills.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum of sufficient breadth and balance to meet the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the National Curriculum and the local agreed syllabus for religious education. Opportunities for enrichment are very good through effective use of visits and visitors and a broad range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation overall is good and resources are satisfactory and are used well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum provision for the Foundation Stage and in the speech and language and hearing impairment units is very good.
- Accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage are very good.
- Curriculum provision for numeracy and literacy are good.
- Out of lesson enrichment is very good.
- Accommodation in the speech and language unit is unsatisfactory.
- Unsatisfactory depth of curriculum coverage of topics in science.

Commentary

22. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection and is good overall. It meets the needs of pupils in the National Curriculum, personal, social and health education and citizenship and also in religious education and collective worship.
23. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good and is planned with care and imagination. It is now consistent with the national guidelines. Throughout the school,

the topics are generally well planned and hold the children's attention very well. Where the curriculum provision and the teaching quality have been improved, the standards are improving and the pupils achieve well. This is particularly so in English and mathematics. Good examples were seen of effective use of topics and of good links between subjects, and this helps make the teaching more interesting and relevant to the pupils. In Year 4, although all areas of the curriculum are being covered in information and communication technology and in science, there is often a lack of depth when covering themes. Consequently, in science, these pupils are not achieving as well as they should and standards are below the expected level. In ICT, the curriculum being covered is designed for pupils in younger year groups because the pupils in Year 4 have many gaps in their skills and knowledge and need to catch up.

24. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is satisfactory. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of its provision for sex and relationship education and drug education. All staff are committed to making sure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and this contributes to the positive ethos in the school. There is good provision for pupils with SEN in the main school and they are very well supported so that they make good progress towards the targets set for them.
25. The curriculum provision for the pupils in the SEN units is very good. For pupils with language and communication difficulties, the curriculum is initially based both upon the Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum. However, in the first year of provision, there is good emphasis on the pupils acquiring social skills, basic skills, vocabulary and thinking skills, and early literacy skills. For the two pupils with HI, the pupil in Year 4 spends almost all of his time in mainstream classes and the pupil in Year 2 has individual support for language development. The speech and language pupils are partly included into mainstream lessons. However, the provision is limited by the availability of specialist support. Their mainstream teachers receive good support and advice on the best ways to include the pupils from the speech and language and hearing impaired pupils in the lessons. The SEN unit provision for pupils with speech and language difficulties is from age four to seven and for pupils with hearing impairment from age four to nine, after which times they are normally integrated into other mainstream schools across the county.
26. The curriculum is very well supported and enriched by a broad range of well-planned visits and visitors and by a broad range of clubs. Visits include a residential trip for Year 4, beach visits, zoo visits, museum visits, working visits to the local Broads and Carlton Marshes and trips to Norwich castle. Visitors, including a number of parents, often come in to talk to groups of pupils. Well-attended clubs include skittleball, unihoc, football, kwik cricket, athletics, swimming, gymnastics, cookery, choir, recorders, chess and the Good News club. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in competitive sports, including competitions involving 17 schools.
27. Accommodation is generally good, albeit a little cramped in places. Some of the classrooms, for example, are small. However, the extra working areas available offset this. The library is reasonably spacious and the outdoor facilities are good. There is a well-developed outdoor wildlife area but this is not as well maintained as it might be.

The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is very good and the grassed and paved areas outside are fenced securely. Resources are satisfactory overall and are good in English and physical education, and very good in information and communication technology and for children under five. Accommodation for pupils with speech and language difficulties is unsatisfactory. The main classroom is too small, a situation that will become even more of a problem with further planned admissions.

28. Throughout the school, the level of staffing is good, with the committed team teachers and teaching assistants being well matched to the needs of the curriculum. These are very well matched for children in the Foundation Stage and in the two SEN units.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is good. The support advice and guidance they receive based on monitoring is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes good relationships very well.
- Every pupil in the school has an adult to turn to and this provides good support.
- Monitoring of pupils' progress is good and enables them to understand the target for their next step.
- There are no formal ways for pupils to express their views through a school council.
- Induction procedures are good.

Commentary

29. The very good quality of the relationships between all staff and pupils is one of the key characteristics of the school. A practical result of this is that pupils have several adults to whom they can turn and in whom they can trust. This means that pupils feel free, for example, to discuss matters that they are worried about with staff because they know they will seriously consider their concerns. The pupils are safe and feel well looked after. This positive spirit permeates through the provision of pupils' care, allowing them to be relaxed and feel well supported, and so to feel happy. Both child protection provision and health and safety procedures are satisfactory and all requirements are met; however, the radiators in the toilets are not guarded to prevent children reaching the very hot surfaces. First-aid procedures are also satisfactory. A reasonable range of risk assessments is in place and the site is checked regularly. The building is kept clean and displays are stimulating and colourful. A counsellor for pupils who are experiencing difficulties in the school is a worthwhile and purposeful initiative developed by the school and is most beneficial.
30. The care present in the school is reflected very well in the effort the school makes to monitor each individual's progress in order to set their next target. In English and mathematics, and in science for older age groups, pupils have a good idea of what it is they need to do to improve. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

31. The school has yet to create a school council where pupils' views can be formally aired and recorded. This sense of responsibility and development of maturity is beginning within the playground Friends group in Year 4, itself a recent innovation. The pupils meet a member of staff to review and discuss the actions of the previous week and to assess the effectiveness of their roles. This is good practice and valued by the pupils. The pupils decide upon the class rules which are 'negotiated' at the beginning of each year. Overall, pupils are listened to satisfactorily through the very nature of the good relationships and their views are respected.
32. The Reception children are welcomed into the school in a very caring way. Before they officially start school, they visit the classroom to meet their teachers and to become familiar with the building and each other. The parents comment that this is a good experience for their children and helps them to know the school routines. The induction procedures for pupils arriving after Year 1 are based upon the same guiding ethos. Having several adults to turn to is important and the pupils spoken to in Year 4 who had joined the school after Year 1 were emphatic that they had settled in quickly.
33. Support and guidance for the pupils in the SEN units is very good. The school is committed to the inclusion of all the pupils and inclusion arrangements are effective in promoting the pupils' social development and academic learning. All pupils have a very good trusting relationship with staff and they appreciate working alongside their friends in the mainstream classes knowing that they have the support of unit staff when required. Within the units, pupils have a trusting and comfortable relationship with all the staff.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and good links with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very well informed and reporting to parents is very good.
- The school deals with concerns and complaints very well.
- Parents are not formally consulted on their views.
- Community ties cover a broad spectrum of small links.
- Transfer links to middle school are good.

Commentary

34. Informing and reporting to parents is a strength of the school because of the good quality of the teacher/parents meetings and the annual pupils' reports. At the two major consultation evenings in the spring and autumn terms, the teachers and parents discuss the target setting and review the children's previous targets. This means that the parents share effectively what is expected of their children as they go through the school. The annual pupils' reports are good overall and give very good information about the progress and achievements made in English, mathematics and science. Several parents responding to the questionnaire felt they could have been better informed but the inspectors do not uphold this view. Newsletters sent out by the school are satisfactory and they are supplemented by twice-termly newsletters

produced by the Parents Friends Staff Association (PFSA) which provide the parents with a good level of detail on events coming up and money raised. Curriculum information provided to the parents is also good because at the start of every term each teacher sends out a plan for that term. In a similar vein, the school is very approachable to parents; concerns and complaints are dealt with efficiently. The headteacher promises a response within 24 hours. Most parents are very positive about the openness of the school.

35. Although the school is very approachable to parents, there is no formal invitation to them to comment on their satisfaction with the school or to suggest ways that they feel might improve it. Consultation with parents therefore does not form a regular part of school development except in so far as they are informally gathered through casual meetings or through complaints. The PFSA raises large sums for the school and coordinates very effectively with school priorities. Several of the parents help in the school on a regular basis – mostly with reading - and some grandparents are also regular visitors.
36. Links with the community are good because of the many links stretching across the community. For example, the local pub gives all profits from the school events with which it is involved. The PFSA's success means a high profile in the community; staff and parents speak of a good school choir which sings at several community functions and performs for the elderly at Christmas and for charity events. Christmas 'boxes' are prepared and given to the local hospital when nurses visit the school for the final assembly of term. A local milkman visits the school and appropriate curriculum work is covered imaginatively. The church is used effectively as a resource and the curate takes regular assemblies. Local banks offer financial support through the governor links and the school is regularly used by the after-school club and local clubs such as the karate and keep-fit clubs.
37. The good links with other schools revolve principally around the transfer procedures with the neighbouring middle school and the close ties with the other three primary schools. These good arrangements are enhanced by teachers from the middle school who visit the Year 4 classes. The Year 4 pupils spend time on a residential trip when they meet other pupils of the similar age group. These links reinforce the personal development of pupils very well. The links with other schools also include the local pyramid group involving eight primaries. Training needs are pooled and the secondary school at the top of the pyramid pays for 12 hours of staff cover per year. Good ongoing links have been established with a range of schools in North Suffolk through outreach and advisory work because of the work of the SEN units.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and his management of the school is also good. The subject leaders are developing their subjects well and are providing good direction to the development of their areas of responsibility. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision of the future developments for the curriculum and the quality of teaching throughout the school, and has developed a very good ethos.

- English and mathematics are being developed well under the guidance and direction of the headteacher and the subject leaders.
- Insufficient emphasis placed upon developing the quality of the curriculum and teaching and learning in science and ICT.
- The school has a very good commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in all that it does.
- The management of the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The management of special educational needs and the provision for the pupils in the language and communication and hearing impairment units are very good.
- The school has a good monitoring procedure to ensure that funds are allocated sensibly and carefully.

Commentary

38. The quality of leadership of the headteacher is good. The headteacher is committed to improving the quality of education and to developing a school where every child is totally included in all that is done. He is ably supported by the deputy in the management of the school. They have set out a clear direction for the future developments of the school and over the past two years have ensured that the school's improvement plan focused appropriately upon the priorities to raise the pupils' standards in reading throughout the school. Through training and performance management, the quality of teaching has been improved significantly since the last inspection and good and often very good teaching has developed successfully, especially in English and mathematics. The headteacher has devised good strategies to monitor and evaluate the teaching in each classroom. He has also arranged for additional support to be given to help establish the routines of the newly-qualified teachers in the school.
39. The senior management team has developed good strategies to check upon the school's performance and carries out good evaluation of what it achieves. However, the number of staff on this senior management team is high and the minutes show that meetings are often overtaken by discussions about minor issues that could be held in a different forum. This is unsatisfactory use of time and is counter-productive. The headteacher has fostered a very positive attitude throughout the school so that all adults and children make sure that all pupils are valued as individuals and that they are given very good guidance. The parents give the headteacher their full support. All pupils are totally involved in all that the school does. Consequently, the school has a very good ethos, which is a major strength.
40. The governing body, led by a committed and knowledgeable chair of governors, gives the headteacher and the school good support. The governors have successfully improved the quality of their governance since the last inspection and take an active part in planning and monitoring. There is full compliance with statutory requirements and many governors visit the school frequently and work closely with the headteacher and staff by giving them good support. All governors follow training sessions and they now have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
41. The quality of management of the school is good. The headteacher, staff and governing body have established a good school improvement plan, which gives a

clear outline of the planned priorities for the next three years. The role of the subject leaders is being developed very well. The quality of teaching is monitored and this has helped to improve the quality of the teachers' planning and teaching.

42. The subject leaders have also developed their management roles effectively since the last inspection and are especially active when their subject is a focus for development. They manage the resources for their subjects carefully and many have had opportunities to check upon the quality of teaching for their subjects. Some additional emphasis has been placed upon the development of their ICT skills and most teachers are now successfully using inter-active whiteboards in their classrooms. This is proving to be most successful and builds effectively upon the nationwide course which most teachers completed to improve their uses of ICT to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects. However, there is insufficient focus upon developing the science and ICT curriculum and not enough emphasis is placed on these two subjects by the school and the subject co-ordinators in order to raise standards.
43. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good and the curriculum is imaginative and very stimulating. The planning routines and the assessment procedures are very good. The daily routines are very well organised to ensure that all children experience the six areas of learning appropriately.
44. The leadership and management of both SEN units are very good. The teachers in both units are very experienced and well qualified and have a very good vision for the development of their units. Individual pupil provision is as a result of detailed assessment and observations using a wide range of formal and informal methods to build up a pupil profile and to inform individual education plans (IEPs). The use of basic signing has been well promoted throughout the school. Both teachers provide good role models and have created effective teams working with the language teachers (SaLTs) and teaching assistants. Provision has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator for the main school gives very good leadership and management to the development of the provision for SEN.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	870,018	Balance from previous year	79,226
Total expenditure	860,564	Balance carried forward to the next	88,681
Expenditure per pupil	2,988		

45. The school has a good monitoring procedure to ensure that funds are allocated sensibly and carefully. Furthermore, it makes good use of the resources available and deploys the teachers and teaching assistants effectively to raise standards. Although there is a larger than usual carry forward, the governing body and the headteacher have put aside a considerable amount of this money to resurface the playground and to replace wooden windows and doors around the school. The school has developed good principles of best value for money, especially when deciding upon the

purchasing of new reading materials and the selection of the interactive whiteboards. Both of these areas of expenditure have proved to be successful in raising standards.

46. The school has made substantial improvements since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved, with more lessons being good and better, and the planning of lessons is good. The headteacher and all staff have developed a very caring school. The pupils, whose attainment on entry into the school was in line with the expected levels for their age, achieve well by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. The quality of the leadership by the headteacher is good and the governance of the school is good. There is strong evidence to show that the school has the capacity to improve further. The annual expenditure per pupil is below the national average and consequently, 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

The provision for the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

Fourteen of the children in the Foundation Stage have been in school full time since the beginning of the autumn term but a similar number only attend part time in the afternoons until the beginning of the term in which they become five. It is clear that this year most have entered the Reception class with attainment that is very varied but standards are broadly in line with the expected levels for their age. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good and overall provision has improved since the last inspection. Some Year 1 pupils in the SEN units join the Reception classes for creative and physical education lessons. The relationships are very good and Reception children wait patiently for those who are not quite so quick. All pupils interact well and are fully integrated in their activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Already, nearly all children are achieving well and have quickly developed very good attitudes to learning since beginning school.

Commentary

47. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. The adults have high expectations and show very good care and concern to the children. This brings about very good quality learning and consequently nearly all the children are on course to reach the goals expected well before they enter Year 1. The children enjoy coming to school and they already have a good understanding of the classroom routines. They move about independently with confidence and as they tackle the tasks they are encouraged very effectively to take turns, to share equipment and to tidy up. The role-play corners, for example, "Decorator's shop", are explored well by the children and this develops a sound interaction between them as they talk about what they are doing. The positive support is successful and as a result the children are interested and keen to learn and are involved happily in their tasks with others. They help each other putting on aprons and they take pride in their finished work. The good induction arrangements enable all the families to join the school confidently and the daily contact when children arrive or leave at the end of the day is most beneficial.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All the children make good progress due to the very good teaching.
- Their achievements since they started school are good.

Commentary

48. The quality of teaching and learning are very good. The teachers, ably supported by the teaching assistant, make accurate assessments of what each child can do. All the children make good progress in the development of their literacy skills. The children are fully involved with imaginative tasks that are varied very well to develop literacy skills. The activities to develop the children's letter sounds are well devised and there is good use of songs and stories. Several children already know the sounds of many letters. For example, they were observed practising the sound of the letters "c" and "k". They had collected objects that began with these letters. The development of writing is progressing well, with tracing over letters, building large letters using building blocks and play dough, painting the first letter of their names and using the computer to drag and drop shapes to improve pencil control. Most of the children speak clearly and most speak in complete sentences when answering questions. Their achievements since they started school are good and nearly all are on course to reach the goals expected of them well before they enter Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The tasks are very imaginative and planned effectively to help the children achieve well.

Commentary

49. The quality of teaching is very good. Most children are well on course to reach the expected goals by the time they reach the end of their Reception Year. Most children can count up to five and many can order and recognise the numbers up to ten. For the short time they have been in school, they have achieved well and have made good progress in gaining skills and understanding in numeracy. For example, the children made numerals in play dough and then printed out the same number of objects. The teacher gave closer attention to those children who needed to group 'teddy bears' into the correct number to match the required set. The staff intervene effectively when the children need help and assess what each child has achieved during the lesson. These records are placed on the computer assessment program and are used well to plan what each child is taught next.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The classroom is well set up to provide opportunities for children's investigations.
- Role-play corners help the children to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as imaginative use of the equipment.
- The tasks are very well supported with excellent equipment.

Commentary

50. The teaching and the planning for this area of learning is very good and consequently the children, including those with SEN, achieve well. In the lesson, seen the teaching was excellent because elements of science that are difficult for young children to understand were covered extremely well so that all understood. The classroom is spacious and the staff use this to the best advantage. Many areas are designed to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor area is used productively for exploring the uses of wheeled toys and the garden patches enable the children to grow flowers or vegetables in the summer. The role-play corners are currently set up as a decorator's shop and the world of a tree house, depicting autumn. The adults intervene effectively, using good questioning techniques and imaginative use of equipment. For example, spy-hole boxes and torches were used in an excellent way to help the children to understand that objects can only be seen when they are 'lit up'. The children have a good sense of living in their locality and can talk eagerly about their shops, the sea shore and the beach. They are developing a good knowledge of stories from the Bible and attend the school acts of worship. Nearly all the children are on course to reach the expected goals for their age by the end of the Reception Year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy their physical education lessons.
- They achieve well and show that their skills are developing well above the expected levels for their age.

Commentary

51. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was very good. The teachers plan extremely well to provide a constructive and imaginative development of the children's skills and knowledge for all children, including those with SEN. The children's skills of balancing and developing a sequence of movements with a partner are well above the expected levels for their age. They enjoy the lessons and the teachers make good use of showing how well certain children could perform these skills. This helped to improve the skills of many others and during the lesson they achieved well. Nearly all managed to dress themselves in physical education kit

reasonably independently. In other lessons, their writing and cutting skills are being developed well and overall they have made good achievements since the beginning of the term. They are all on course to reach the expected goals well before they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have achieved well since joining the school.
- Good use of ICT promotes early writing skills.

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching is very good and this ensures that the children achieve well. The pupils from the SEN units who join the Reception classes for these activities achieve very well and are sensitively involved in activities. Their standards are similar to their peers and are on course to reach the expected goals for the Reception age range by the end of the year. Children's hand skills are developing well when they use crayons and scissors. Media such as crayon and paints are used effectively to improve the children's writing skills. The computers are used well to promote the children's ICT skills and already most demonstrate good control of the mouse to drag and drop shapes onto the screen.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use of English in other subjects helps extend and develop writing skills.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Leadership and management are very good with clear emphasis focussing upon the development of reading and research skills which have helped raise the pupils' standards and achievement.
- Very good monitoring and tracking of the pupils' progress help ensure good achievement.
- The use of the library and development of library skills are not as well developed as they should be.

Commentary

53. The results of the 2004 national tests showed that Year 2 pupils were in line with the national average in reading and well above in writing. These results are a significant improvement on the previous year and show very good improvement in both areas over the past three years. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that pupils in Year 2 are currently above the expected level in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils in Year 4 are at the level expected for their age and they have progressed well in their writing and reading skills since being below the national average in Year 2. The level of achievement is good throughout the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
54. Although standards vary from year to year, pupils generally enter the school at about the level expected. Teachers work hard to develop their listening skills and pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking skills through class discussions and paired discussions. Very good use of drama, based on a Big Book about "*Elmer the Patchwork Elephant*", was seen in Year 2. Progress is consistently good and by Year 4 most pupils are confident speakers and have a wide vocabulary, as was seen in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were replacing 'ordinary' verbs with 'powerful' verbs.
55. The pupils' reading skills are developed well and pupils have positive attitudes to books and to reading. Letter sounds are taught well and constantly reinforced and there is early emphasis on developing good reading skills, using picture and context clues, as, for example, was observed in a Year 1 focus group using the Big Book, '*Not Now Bernard*'. The pupils in Year 4 are able to explain how to use a contents page and an index to help research but in Year 4 particularly, there are weaknesses in the pupils' knowledge and skills enabling them to find a book on a given topic in the school library, even when prompted. The library is under-used and the pupils' library skills are underdeveloped. This is something that has been recognised by the subject co-ordinator but this weakness has a detrimental impact upon the way that pupils read and find out about topics they are studying in other subjects. Recent additions mean that there is a reasonable range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, with a good range of texts from different cultures. Good use is made of the home/school reading records.
56. There has been a strong emphasis on improving writing through the school and the range of strategies has succeeded in raising standards. Handwriting is regularly taught and presentation is generally good. Good use is made of a range of writing genres to improve extended writing, as, for instance, the Year 3 lessons on shape poems observed.
57. The overall quality of teaching in English is good and enables all pupils, including those with SEN in the main school and in the units, to learn and achieve well. Some very good teaching was seen during the period of the inspection. The work in these lessons was clearly defined to match the needs of groups of pupils. Teachers made very good use of direct teaching to direct the pupils and to raise standards. Relationships are very good and teachers are good role models, encouraging pupils so that they really want to learn and do well. The teachers generally manage the pupils' behaviour well and make sure that the activities are varied and appropriate to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils so that they are effectively motivated. The teachers generally keep a lively pace, which also stimulates and helps keep the pupils

focused. Assessment is very good and is used very well to monitor how well pupils are doing so that they progress well. None of the teaching seen was less than satisfactory during the inspection but the quality of teaching does vary and in a small number of lessons the pupil management was not as secure and the work not as demanding as it might be.

58. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very clear grasp of both the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has produced a well-thought-out action plan. Teaching and learning are monitored well and good use has been made of staff development opportunities. Very good strategies, such as monitoring, sharing and evaluating pupils' work samples throughout the school, have been successful in raising standards and improving achievement. The pupils with SEN are well supported by teachers and by teaching assistants and make good progress towards the targets set for them. Resources are good and are generally used well by teachers. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning and good use is being made of the interactive white boards to help kindle enthusiasm and pupil participation.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

59. One of the strengths of the school is the way that literacy is being developed across all subjects and this is helping to raise standards. This is a continuing emphasis and examples of well-planned opportunities to develop literacy skills were seen in a wide range of subjects, including geography, history, science and religious education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- ICT is used well to support teaching and learning with the interactive whiteboards.
- The use of numeracy skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

Commentary

60. The results of the national tests in 2004 show that the pupils' standards in mathematics have risen over the last year from average to well above average in Year 2, when compared with all schools nationally and also with similar schools. Currently, the pupils' standards are above the expected levels for their age and they achieve well. Pupils in Year 4 are also achieving well and standards are above national expectations. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils' standards have improved mainly due to the successful intervention strategies. The quick identification of areas of weaknesses in using and applying mathematical knowledge to problem solving and also the recognition of the poor performance of lower ability pupils has been influential in raising standards.

61. The raising of standards is also a direct result of the improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers are confident and competent in their subject knowledge. All lessons are well planned and clear learning objectives are set which effectively focus pupils on their tasks. Lessons begin with well-paced mental activities involving all class members, followed by well-defined and challenging tasks for differing groups of pupils. End of lesson discussions are used well to consolidate the learning. In the best lessons, the teachers challenge their pupils through well-directed and suitably demanding questions. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson where pupils were learning that multiplication is repeated addition, the pupils enjoyed the challenge of recognising numbers that were 'lots of 2' and there were beams of satisfaction when they were successful at the task. Very occasionally, poor pace to lessons does not leave sufficient time to consolidate new learning and to correct any errors in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. A notable feature of all lessons is the good relationship evident between teachers, support staff and pupils. The teaching assistants provide good support, mainly for the lower ability pupils, which enable pupils' learning. Pupils are well motivated and their generally good attitudes to their learning are a strong contributory factor to their good learning. The pupils with SEN achieve very well because work is closely matched to their needs and abilities.
62. The subject co-ordinator has very good vision for the development of the subject and many developments have proved to be successful. A weekly challenge session is held to improve pupils' understanding of how to apply their mathematical knowledge. Research into why lower ability pupils were not achieving well has resulted in more appropriate targets being set for them, and staff training, mainly in the teaching of number, has been given to raise teachers' subject expertise and confidence. Additionally, a very well received session for parents was provided to show them how their children approach problem solving. Assessment procedures are good. In addition to the National Curriculum testing at the end of Year 2, the optional tests for Year 3 and Year 4 are also used to provide information on each pupil's progress and to highlight any areas of concern. The teachers when planning future work then effectively use the information.
63. Information and communication technology (ICT), mainly in the use of interactive whiteboards, is used effectively to introduce learning objectives and provides the pupils not only with a focal point for their learning but also with a less abstract presentation of learning that the lower ability pupils in particular relate to well. In lessons, pupils were observed to be well motivated through such use of ICT, which helped to make their learning enjoyable and to extend their understanding. For example, in a very good Year 4 lesson on multiples of numbers, pupils had to 'burst' bubbles rising from a bath that contained correct answers. They quickly responded to this and enjoyed the challenge to test their learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Little evidence was available about the use of numeracy in supporting the teaching and learning in other subjects. Pupils are not being provided with sufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology to graph and to sort

mathematical data to reinforce their learning. The school is aware of this and intends to put the development of it in the next improvement plan.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject not covered in sufficient depth.
- Some weaknesses in the quality of teaching and assessment.
- Leadership of the curriculum is underdeveloped and unsatisfactory.
- Teaching builds effectively on what pupils already know.
- Teaching is made relevant to pupils' lives.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those from the speech and language and hearing impairment units are very well supported and included.

Commentary

65. The standards in science by the end of Year 2 have been below the national average for several years. However, the most recent test results based on the teachers' assessment in 2004 show that standards are now improving and are in line with the national average. The standard of work in the pupils' books and those noted in lessons during the inspection were generally in line with national expectations. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were well below the expected levels.
66. The pupils in Year 4 attain standards that are below the expected levels for their age, even though they have shown significant improvements and achieved well, since their standards were well below average at the end of Year 2. This is a decline in standards since the last inspection because the pupils have still had too few opportunities to undertake investigational science tasks. However, the pupils' achievement is still unsatisfactory because the standards are still too low when compared with the higher standards which the pupils are now achieving in reading, writing and mathematics. It is clear that this is caused because the science topics are not covered in sufficient depth in the older year groups to enable pupils to achieve as well as they might. For example, the pace of work in some lessons is often too slow and this causes sections of the planned topic to be curtailed or even omitted because time runs out.
67. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the scheme of work and has allocated an appropriate amount of curriculum time for the teaching of science. The full range of science topics is taught throughout the school and appropriate activities are carried out which develop the pupils' skills and scientific understanding. However, teachers do not always use time effectively and consequently themes are not covered in sufficient depth. Often, the teachers do not complete the planned programme for one theme before beginning the next one. This is unsatisfactory because the pupils do not have a comprehensive knowledge of what has been taught and therefore they

achieve less well than they should, resulting in them having gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding.

68. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall but it is inconsistent. In the lessons observed, it varied significantly, with two lessons being unsatisfactory and others being good. In the lessons when the teaching was good, the teachers plan their work carefully, introducing scientific understanding in terms of pupils' experience, for example, illustrating friction as it relates to parts of a bicycle. The teachers employ good teaching strategies so that teaching can build on what the pupils already know. The good teaching seen held the pupils' interests, making them eager to learn. For example, the pupils in Year 1 were excited to enter the "*dark, dark place*" in their classroom to discover which of their collection of objects was a source of light. In the lessons when the teaching was unsatisfactory, the pace of lessons was slow and sometimes the pupils spent too long recording a simple activity, and this sometimes caused them to lose concentration in their work. The teaching of scientific language is generally good but some teachers are less confident in their scientific knowledge and teaching opportunities are missed. Sometimes, there is insufficient planning for pupils of higher abilities, with pupils being given another task if they finish early rather than being challenged to a higher level at the outset. The pupils with special educational needs and those from the speech and language and hearing impairment units are very well supported and included in all lessons and achieve well in relation to their ability.
69. The assessment of pupils' work in science is at an early stage of development. The teachers' day-to-day assessments are good. All teachers assess their pupils in lessons and most use these assessments of pupils' understanding well and adapt their day-to-day planning and teaching accordingly. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and in most instances the quality of marking is good overall, which helps the pupils to understand what they need to do to improve, and they are given time to do this before going on to the next piece of work. However, sometimes, marking is insufficiently analytical and occasionally incorrect science in pupils' books is not identified or corrected. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching science and consequently their scientific knowledge is insecure and assessment of the National Curriculum levels is not always consistent. The science co-ordinator is aware of this and has already begun training sessions with the whole staff.
70. The leadership of science is unsatisfactory because the subject has not been the focus for whole-school improvement for some time. Consequently, the quality of teaching and assessment varies across the school, which results in standards being lower than those expected. The subject leader is aware of this and has prepared plans for development which are intended to address the weaknesses in the present provision. She has already reviewed the resources for science, ordered some new equipment, and arranged storage in classrooms for easy access. The school does not have sufficient materials when studying animal skeletons. The school is well equipped to use computers for obtaining information but teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT to allow the pupils to record experimental data in graphs and charts. The subject leader has considerable expertise and is available to support teachers informally in their planning. She has recommended appropriate activities for all year groups which

reflect the increased emphasis on scientific investigations, and where teachers have made good use of this support, it has been effective in raising standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 4 is below the expected levels for their age.
- The organisation of the pupils' saved work is unsatisfactory.
- The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly as expected.
- The teachers have improved their skills and knowledge of ICT and use interactive whiteboards competently and with confidence to enhance teaching and learning.

Commentary

71. During the inspection, there were few times when it was possible to observe the pupils using the computers. Wall displays, as well as discussions with a group of pupils in Year 4, provide evidence upon which judgements are made. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. The standards in Year 4 are below the expected levels for their age and this is because they have had few opportunities as they have moved up the school to master skills, knowledge and understanding in ICT. The pupils in Year 4 can access programs with ease and log into the computer system. However, when they were questioned about their work, they spent too much time trying to find pieces of their work. The pupils described what they had found out by using the Internet but very little of this work was available for inspection. The way the school saves pupils' work is not organised. The pupils were faced with an impossible task searching whole class lists of work to find their own. Their previous work had been deleted from the computers and recent work had not been saved in known files or folders. This makes it impossible for the teachers to track an individual pupil's work to allow them to assess what has been achieved and to gauge how much progress has been made from one year to the next.
72. The planned lessons for the Year 4 gradually build upon what each pupil already knows. However, because of gaps in their knowledge from previous years, the older pupils have not yet mastered the skills and understanding expected for pupils of their age. This occasionally means that topics are curtailed in order to cover the full range of topics and themes in the national guidelines.
73. The pupils in Year 4 enthusiastically demonstrated their knowledge of simulation programs such as "*The Crystal Rainforest*" but could not use spreadsheet programs or database facilities. Simple word processing skills have been mastered and some pupils could enhance their work using graphics and other commands to change the font, colour and shapes of their text. In one lesson in Year 4, the pupils, including some with SEN, were observed creating their own version of the pointillist style of painting in their study of the work of Seurat. This was successfully completed with some pleasing results, with pupils with SEN attaining standards on a par with their peers.

74. The pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with the expected levels for their age. Their achievement is satisfactory but the quality of this work does not reflect the higher levels they reach in reading, writing and mathematics and currently is not high enough. The pupils in Year 2 have recently used the graphics program to design symmetrical designs. They used the tools for drawing and filling competently. These pupils are confident in their uses of ICT and are enthusiastic. The pupils in Year 1 also explored the uses of "*Wordart*" while writing their name and other labels. This is above average work and reflects the fact that the school is gradually improving the skills of the younger pupils, who are already achieving better than the pupils in Year 4. The pupils in the two SEN units have lessons in the computer suite and were seen exploring the use of the mouse to drag and drop accurately with good hand-eye control.
75. The school has recently upgraded the computer suite and installed a network to serve the computers in the computer suite, the other computers in two other bays and in the classrooms. There are problems with this new system and consequently the teachers had difficulty loading certain programs and even lost pupils' work during the inspection. This room contains 12 computers, a scanner and printers and is too small for whole-class use and consequently pupils have limited opportunities to use it.
76. The provision for ICT has been improved significantly since the last inspection and now nearly every classroom has an interactive whiteboard. This new technical facility is having a marked impact upon the provision made for ICT. All the teachers are using the interactive whiteboards very well and for demonstrating ICT skills and processes the use is very good. The new technology has improved the quality of teaching across the whole curriculum and has raised the quality of teaching in others subjects extremely well. The teachers create their teaching plans on the computers and these are then stored for future use. In the classrooms, the teachers devise good activities using the interactive whiteboard and this stimulates and enhances the teaching and learning. For example, very good use was made of a mathematics program to ensure that the pupils gained a full understanding of multiples of 5 and 10. They popped the bubbles containing the correct number, for example, 15, 35, as they floated up from a bath. Other use was seen in a science lesson where the teacher displayed a bicycle and then asked some pupils to mark on the board where friction was helpful or not helpful. The teachers use the national guidelines very effectively to plan the ICT curriculum for their classes but because the whole class cannot be taught at the same time topics are often not taught in as much depth as is needed to reinforce the pupils' skills and knowledge. The teachers have all completed an in-service course successfully and this has improved their own skills, knowledge and confidence effectively. There is a whole-school system for recording which skills the pupils have mastered and this is based upon the skills listed in the national guidelines for ICT. All these factors make the provision for ICT satisfactory.
77. Currently, there is no subject leader and the headteacher is holding this post in preparation for a teacher to be appointed as co-ordinator by the end of the year. The headteacher has a good knowledge of the subject and understands what is needed in the future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. In literacy and numeracy lessons, the teachers often use a laptop computer and interactive whiteboard to help with the presentation. This provides a good stimulus as the pupils are beginning to demonstrate their answers and ideas using the keyboard and screen for whole class involvement.
79. It is evident that the pupils use word-processing competently to copy stories and also poems. In mathematics, good use is made of a practice program to improve the pupils' skills and knowledge of additional subtraction and multiplication facts. It is clear from the displays around the school that the pupils have been taught to use graphics programs effectively and that the use of the digital camera is being developed.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

No lessons were observed in history and only one in geography. There was only a very small sample of work available in both subjects. Therefore, it is not possible to make any judgements on provision, standards, achievement, or the overall quality of teaching or learning.

In the one Year 2 geography lesson seen, the teaching and learning were good. The pupils were looking at weather and most had an above-expected level of understanding and achieved well, being able to explain about weather symbols and to use them effectively to produce their own weather forecasts. The lesson was well prepared and resourced, with good teamwork between the teachers. The pace of work was good and the activities were stimulating and varied. Speaking and learning skills were well developed and effective use was made of the interactive whiteboard and computer.

Discussions with the teachers and a review of planning indicate that all areas of the National Curriculum are covered in both geography and history and a review of displays shows good links between subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links between religious education and personal and social education.
- The subject is related well to pupils' own experiences, which makes it more relevant and interesting to them.
- There are not enough opportunities to enable pupils to develop awareness of multi-faith issues.

Commentary

80. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. It is clear from the evidence seen that pupils throughout the school are attaining standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. Some of the work seen and the understanding shown by some pupils are better than might

be expected for their age, as, for example, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were thinking about special occasions and celebrations. The pupils with SEN make the same progress as all other pupils and good examples were seen of very good support for these pupils, with good teamwork between the teachers and teaching assistants.

81. The teaching is satisfactory overall and during the inspection some very good teaching was also seen. Relationships are good and the teachers encourage and motivate the pupils well so that they enjoy, and have positive attitudes for, religious education. The school has recently introduced a system of assessing pupils' work regularly, which is based upon each unit of study. Although it is too soon to make a judgement on how effective this is, it does make it easier for teachers to monitor how well pupils are doing and to plan work more effectively. One of the strengths of religious education is that it is closely linked to pupils' own experiences and made relevant to their needs. This was seen, for instance, in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were thinking about the effect of actions upon the environment. It also illustrates the good links between religious education and the pupils' personal and social development. A Year 3 lesson about special occasions also explored personal and social issues very well and there was a real air of mystery and excitement which generated a sense of awe and wonder. There are good links too with the recent Harvest assembly where issues of 'fair trade' were explored well.
82. The leadership and management of the subject by the subject co-ordinator are satisfactory. She has a clear awareness of how she intends to further develop the subject. The action plan recognises the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to explore multi-faith issues. Some use has been made of the interactive whiteboards displaying an Internet site about life and religion in India. This has been successful in widening the pupils' understanding of customs and traditions as well as other religious beliefs. Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning are limited but there is a rolling programme of release time for the co-ordinator and a new assessment procedure which provides a sound basis for development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

83. Only two lessons of the teaching of art were observed, and no judgements can be made about subject provision, pupils' achievements, standards, or the overall quality of teaching and learning. Analysis of subject documentation shows that assessment procedures are in place and an adapted Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) scheme of work provides flexibility in teaching to the wide range of ability.
84. In one very good Year 2 lesson, taken by the subject co-ordinator, very good preparation and teaching style, combined with the teacher's enthusiasm and subject expertise, resulted in a very lively session that was enjoyed by all pupils. The pupils showed their evident pride in their very good learning at investigating lines and colours by their very good attitudes and smiles of achievement. The co-ordinator is a subject specialist and has a good vision for the teaching and development of the subject. Topics are chosen that will interest the pupils, and a subject skill, such as mark making, is concentrated upon each half term.

Design and technology

85. Due to timetable constraints, only one lesson was seen during the inspection and therefore it is not possible to make any judgements on provision, standards, achievement, or the overall quality of teaching or learning. The school has a policy for design and technology and allocates an appropriate amount of curriculum time to the teaching of the subject in each class. The teachers follow a nationally recommended scheme of work. The school is adequately equipped with tools and materials to teach design and technology in the contexts of food, fabrics and resistant materials. In the lesson seen, which was part of a well-structured programme of learning, the teaching was good. The pupils were creative in the development of their designs and confident in applying skills of cutting and joining recycled materials to make a range of musical instruments. Prepared sheets ensured that pupils could record their planning efficiently. They worked well together, sharing materials and equipment with enthusiasm. The pupils with SEN and a pupil from the hearing impairment unit were very well supported and were fully involved in the activity, and achieved well in relation to their ability. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader maintains a file with assessment sheets which is intended to form a comprehensive analytical and useful record relating to each pupil and each topic covered. It is intended that these records will be passed on to the next teacher and used in future planning. The subject leader has identified plans for the development of the subject when it becomes a focus for whole-school development.

Music

86. Only one lesson in music was observed, and no judgements can be made about subject provision, pupils' achievements, standards, or the overall quality of teaching and learning. Analysis of subject documentation shows that assessment procedures are in place and the scheme of work, 'Lively Music', is used to adapt the national guidelines to provide flexibility in teaching to the wide range of pupils' abilities.
87. In the Year 2 lesson in which the pupils composed a piece of music in response to visual stimulus, the teacher's planning, preparation and the teaching were satisfactory. All the pupils showed evident enjoyment at being members of groups using percussion instruments, following the 'conductor's' directions to produce a sound picture of a bonfire and fireworks display. In this lesson, a hearing impaired pupil was fully included by the very good support given by the teacher of the hearing impairment, who used signing effectively to ensure that the pupil understood instructions and the objectives for the lesson.
88. The subject has been without a specialist co-ordinator since September, the role presently being filled by two non-specialist teachers. Although this is not ideal, specialist support and advice is available through a specialist visiting teacher who also runs a successful school choir of some 40 pupils that visit homes for the elderly and this year have been asked to sing for the NSPCC. Additionally, a teaching assistant runs a weekly recorder club.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning for development of skills.
- Teaching and learning is good overall with well-structured lessons.
- Expertise and enthusiasm of subject leader.

Commentary

89. Standards in physical education are in line with those nationally expected at the end of Years 2 and 4 and are improving because this subject is now a focus for whole-school development. The teachers are improving their expertise through good training both within school and from outside experts. Time has been made available for the subject leader to work with the teachers in lessons and consequently the quality of both teaching and learning are improving. The pupils benefit from the use of the school's swimming pool in the summer months and the older pupils attend a local pool to extend their skills, which are in line with expected levels for pupils of this age.
90. The curriculum for physical education is broad and well-balanced and sufficient time is allocated to teaching it. The school uses nationally and locally recommended schemes of work that they have adapted well to their particular circumstances. The quality of teaching and learning is good and during the inspection some lessons seen were also very good. All teachers plan well so that no time is wasted and the skills taught build clearly on previous work so that pupils improve. In all lessons seen, time was used well and there was a good balance between teaching, observing and developing skills and sequences. The pupils enjoy these lessons and most make a real effort to improve. As they practise skills, they are beginning to evaluate their own work and that of others, and they are delighted with their success. Sometimes, the pupils did not always listen carefully enough and improvement was less evident. The pupils with SEN are well supported by experienced assistants and are included in all lessons.
91. The leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has considerable expertise in teaching. She supports teachers very well and the training arranged has led to an increased confidence in those teachers involved. She checks the teachers' planning and after working with them in lessons she prepares a good constructive analysis of strengths and the points for development in the lesson so that teachers know how they can improve. The preparation of assessment grids and core tasks provides the school with useful information about attainment. This enables the pupils' progress to be tracked effectively. Support is given to those pupils who do not achieve the expected standard. The records are passed on to the next teacher and eventually to the next school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

92. The medium-term planning that the school has created is comprehensive and detailed. For example, areas for the teaching of citizenship to young children are particularly well focused. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of its provision for sex and relationship education and drug education. The overall provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship does not yet live up to the expectations laid down in the documentation. Lesson plans do not convey the sort of detail necessary to make the teaching well targeted, but even so the pupils learn satisfactorily. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. An important aspect for citizenship development - a school council - is not yet in place. The school recognises this and is actively working towards its establishment.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

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

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	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	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).