

INSPECTION REPORT

JOHN OF GAUNT INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Aylsham, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120988

Headteacher: Mrs F Chant

Lead inspector: Mr C D Loizou

Dates of inspection: 22-24 November 2004

Inspection number: 267116

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Nursery
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 to 7
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 131

School address: Hungate Street
Aylsham
Norwich
Norfolk
Postcode: NR11 6JZ

Telephone number: 01263 732844

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Copelin

Date of previous inspection: 30 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

John of Gaunt is a community Infant and Nursery school situated in the market town of Aylsham, north of Norwich in Norfolk. The school was formerly a First School with children joining the school in the Reception year (aged four) and leaving at the end of Year 3 (aged eight). In 2001, the school re-organised and became an Infant and Nursery School. There are 131 boys and girls on roll, which is below average. The Nursery can have up to 52 part-time children (26 full-time equivalents). The school admits up to 36 four-year-old children into its Reception year each September. The children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly average overall but attainment in mathematical development is lower than in language and communication. In addition to the Nursery and Reception classes, there are three mixed-age classes, two for Year 1 and 2 pupils and one class for Year 1 and Reception age pupils. The number of pupils leaving or joining the school at times other than the usual time of admission or transfer is similar to most schools. Most of the pupils live near to the school. Nearly all of the pupils are of White British heritage as only a very small percentage (less than one per cent) are of mixed or black Caribbean heritage. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average (13 per cent) and none of the pupils has a statement of special educational need.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18645	Mr C Loizou	Lead inspector	Special educational needs English Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education
14214	Mrs G Smith	Lay inspector	
21103	Mrs V Ives	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

As a result of very good leadership, management and teaching, the school provides a **very good standard of education**. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average. They make very good progress and achieve very well; by the end of Year 2, standards in English and science are well above average; in mathematics they are above average. Overall, the school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the headteacher provides excellent leadership and is very well supported by the staff and governors;
- the pupils achieve high standards in speaking and listening and well above average standards in reading, writing and science;
- the school has a very positive ethos and pupils of all ability, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well;
- the teachers, ably assisted by the very skilled support staff, provide work that interests, stimulates and challenges the pupils and is well matched to their needs;
- the pupils receive a very effective curriculum; there is a broad range of experiences in and out of lessons and information and communication technology is very well used;
- standards are above average and improving in mathematics, but could still be higher.

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected. Standards are rising and the results of the national assessments at the end of Year 2 have been improving at a rate in line with the national trend. The teaching, curriculum, leadership and management have also improved. Very good progress has been made in addressing the key issues. Information and communication technology standards have improved well, as has the outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	B	A	A	A
Writing	A	B	A	A
Mathematics	B	C	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of attaining the higher levels, **achieve very well**. The children enter the Nursery with skills that are average and their language and communication skills are in line with those expected for children of this age. Attainment in mathematics on entry to the school is lower than that in language and communication. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. The large majority of them will attain or exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development; standards in these areas of learning are above average. Children of all abilities will attain the national goals in all the other areas of learning. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The inspection confirms that, by the end of Year 2, standards in English and science are well above average and have improved in mathematics as they are currently above average. Overall, the results have been improving at a rate that is in line with the national trend but mathematics standards could be higher. The overall improvement is reflected in the results for 2004. In mathematics, the results indicate an improvement on the previous year because the

proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels increased. Inspectors found that standards in the current Year 2 are continuing to rise and the pupils are making very good progress. Standards have risen in information and communication technology and are now above what is expected of pupils at the end of Year 2, as they are in art and design, history and religious education. Physical education standards are well above expectations.

The pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good**. They have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education. The teaching is very good and contributes to the very good start made by the children in the Foundation Stage and the pupils' very good learning and achievement in Years 1 and 2. The teachers, very well supported by teaching assistants, are particularly successful in planning exciting and challenging work that meets the needs of different levels of ability, using information from the very good assessment procedures. Very good use is made of resources, particularly those for information and communication technology. The school provides a very good curriculum, enhanced by very good enrichment activities. The care and welfare of the pupils are very good and they are offered very good support and guidance. There are very good links with parents and the community and very good relationships with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management of the school are very good** overall. The headteacher's excellent leadership is having a direct impact on the pupils' achievement and rising standards. There is a strong focus on developing and improving the quality of education. As a result, the school has a very good climate for learning in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to make progress. The governors and all the staff play a significant part in the school's development with very clear targets for improvement. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and ensure that relevant policies are updated and reviewed systematically.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The large majority of parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school. In particular, parents are pleased that their children like school and are made to feel very welcome when they first start. They feel that the school is very well led and managed and the teachers expect their children to work hard. The pupils confirm that they enjoy school and feel that they are treated fairly, learn new things in lessons, and they are shown how to improve their work.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

This is a very effective school in which standards are rising and the pupils are achieving very well. The most important thing the school should do is:

- continue to implement the successful strategies to raise standards in mathematics and to sustain this improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The evidence of the inspection confirms that the pupils' achievement is very good overall. Standards in English and science are well above average by the end of Years 2 and, in mathematics, they are above average. Standards are rising well but could be higher in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages and ability achieve very well because they are very well taught.
- Standards in mathematics could be higher, particularly in the pupils' knowledge of shapes and measures.

Commentary

1. The children enter the Nursery with skills that are average in language and communication skills but some aspects of social, emotional and mathematical understanding are lower than those seen in language. They settle very well, enjoy their time in the Nursery and Reception years and are very well taught. They make great strides, achieve very well and will achieve the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception year in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and most will reach the expected levels in the other areas of learning. A significant proportion, approximately half, will exceed the standards expected for their age, so standards are above average by the end of the Reception year.
2. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and science. However, they were average in mathematics and ought to have been higher given the achievements of the pupils in other subjects. When compared with schools in similar circumstances, the results were similar in all subjects. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. The results over recent years have been improving at a rate in line with the national picture. This improvement was evident in the results for pupils who were in Year 2 in 2004, including an improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in mathematics. This indicates that the school's strategies are beginning to have an impact on mathematics but more needs to be done to sustain this improvement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.6 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.9 (15.8)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.4 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Inspectors found that in Years 1 and 2, the pupils' achievement is very good. The pupils are very well taught and they make rapid gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. In Year 2, standards in English and science are well above average and in mathematics they are above average. The improvement in mathematics is evident throughout Years 1 and 2 because the school has focused on improving mathematics teaching and sharpening assessment procedures to ensure that individual pupils are tracked more closely. This has

been successful in improving standards and is likely to have an impact in the future but the school must ensure that all aspects of mathematics, for example, shapes and measures and not just number work is prioritised in order to sustain an improvement to standards in mathematics.

4. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are rising in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils are achieving very well. The school places a high priority on the pupils' literacy and numeracy and a very close check is kept on how they are progressing. Exciting, well structured lessons and a very strong emphasis on providing practical, first-hand experiences help the pupils to make very good progress in acquiring the basic skills. A wide range of strategies is used to develop the pupils' literacy skills as they move through the school and reading and writing are taught very effectively. However, given the pupils' levels of language and literacy when they first start school, standards in mathematics have lagged behind those seen in reading and writing according to national test results over the last two years. The school has rightly identified this as a priority and has put in place more practical and first-hand opportunities for the pupils to improve their basic numeracy skills. The work in pupils' books does not, however, show that this has been a priority in other aspects of mathematics such as in shape work and measures, including time and data handling. Grammar and spelling are taught well, and this is reflected in the pupils' accuracy in their independent day-to-day writing. The school has rightly identified the need to develop a more systematic approach to the teaching of handwriting to improve the pupils' fluency and standard of presentation. The mathematics programme is well organised and taught and this enables the pupils to reach the expected levels with an improving picture showing that approximately one in three pupils exceeds the standards expected for their age. Standards in science are well above those expected because the pupils are given a variety of stimulating and challenging investigations and experiments, so that they develop the skills of scientific enquiry very well.
5. Among other subjects, standards have risen very well in information and communication technology and are now above those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2, due largely to improvements to resources, teaching and organisation. Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and standards are well above average in physical education. In art and design, history and music, standards are above the expectations of pupils of this age because the pupils enjoy a very broad curriculum that develops their skills progressively as they move through the school.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because of the very good support and nurturing they receive. Planning takes very good account of their specific needs and the teachers ensure that these pupils receive the additional help they need in lessons. The teaching assistants have a significant impact on the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. A significant number of pupils with special educational needs exceed the progress they are expected to make by the end of Year 2. The more able pupils achieve very well because the teachers have high expectations of them and they receive work that challenges and stimulates them to reach the higher levels of which they are capable. This has been successful recently in mathematics in particular which has been a school focus. Those identified as gifted or talented in sport, the arts, or dance and music, for example, extend their skills through the many out-of-school activities and often achieve success.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is very good and their punctuality is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and there have been no exclusions. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school; they are keen to learn and work hard.
- Attendance is well above the national average and very few pupils arrive late.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and well-established routines create a very positive environment for learning.
- Pupils are kind to one another and the school manages occasional incidents of bullying or harassment firmly and effectively.
- Pupils develop into sensible and responsible young people.

Commentary

7. The positive findings of the previous inspection have been maintained and strengthened further; all aspects of pupils' attendance, attitudes and behaviour are now very good. Pupils of all ages are proud of their school and thoroughly enjoy taking part in the activities provided. During lessons, they are enthusiastic and respond very quickly when their teacher wants them to pay attention and listen to what she has to say. Pupils enjoy learning and working relationships are very good. They are quick to take the initiative and have the confidence to ask their teacher for help when they need it. Their 'can do' attitude and the desire to do well help them to make rapid progress in their work and makes a major contribution to the high standards of work seen.
8. The high level of attendance reflects parents' strong commitment to their children's education and the rigour of the school's monitoring procedures. Most of the parents avoid booking a family holiday during the term and they ensure that their children arrive in good time at the start of the school day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

9. Members of staff have a very consistent approach towards behaviour management. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them and behaving responsibly quickly becomes a natural way of life. They can be relied upon to behave sensibly during lessons and at other times, such as during break and lunch times. Bullying is rare and incidents are effectively resolved by a 'face to face' meeting, attended by the pupils involved and their teacher. There were no exclusions last year.
10. Pupils are confident and self-assured. They are also very polite to visitors and are quick to initiate conversations. Pupils clearly recognise the difference between right and wrong and they fully understand why they need to abide by well-chosen rules and values. For example, if children in the Nursery are upset and want to be left alone, they learn to raise their hand gently to signal this. Staff and other children recognise this gesture and respect their wishes. This sensitivity and awareness of others help to maintain the school's vibrant but calm atmosphere. Pupils' spiritual development is very good and pupils of all ages and abilities are encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective. If someone has misbehaved they may spend time on the 'thinking bench' in order to reflect upon the way in which their actions affected others. Pupils are sensitive when exploring emotions and clearly empathised with Esther when studying her story in The Old Testament. Pupils' cultural awareness is very good. They have a clear understanding of major world faiths and festivals such as Hinduism and the Chinese New Year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. The curriculum is very good and there are very good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents and the local community, as well with other schools, are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good and there are very good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers make lessons interesting, exciting and challenging.
- The use of information and communication technology has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
- The teachers use assessment information very well to match work to the needs of different abilities and they are supported very well by the teaching assistants.

Commentary

11. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good and this has a significant impact on the pupils' achievement and progress. The teaching was very good or excellent in just over half of the lessons seen and, across the school, there are many noteworthy features. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and the amount of very good teaching has more than trebled.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	14	12	2	0	0	0

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

12. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well because of the consistent very good quality of teaching. The teachers and teaching assistants work as a highly effective team due, in no small part, to very good management and the excellent leadership of the headteacher who also teaches for part of the week in the Nursery. All of the members of staff know the children really well because of their very detailed assessments of the children and the systematic monitoring of their daily progress. Communication with parents is very good. The highly organised planning ensures that every child works at a level that matches his or her age and ability. The children enter the Nursery with varying abilities and needs which are identified as early as possible. Programmes are then provided that will help each child improve in all areas of learning, particularly in early language and literacy. There has been very good progress since the last inspection in the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage.
13. The school gives the highest priority to the development of the pupils' self-esteem and their progress in literacy and numeracy. Consequently, these areas are very well taught and the pupils achieve very well. The headteacher and subject leader in mathematics have successfully implemented assessments of the pupils in mathematics that has enabled them to target more able pupils and this has already had an impact on standards given the priorities set for raising standards in mathematics. Across the school, teachers have a very clear understanding of how the basic skills should be taught and they have a very consistent approach from class to class. The impact of the headteacher's leadership has been considerable, particularly in the identification and sharing of good practice in the Foundation Stage and across the school. Lessons in literacy and numeracy follow the national guidelines, but are adapted to take account of the pupils' understanding and experience.

This is very consistent and is now being extended to focus on all aspects of mathematics, such as shapes, measures, time and data handling. The teaching of information and communication technology has also improved, due largely to the leadership of the headteacher who has been subject co-ordinator and has been instrumental in improving the knowledge and confidence of the teachers and ensuring consistency from class to class.

14. The pupils respond very positively to the teachers' very high expectations of how they should behave and approach their work. Lessons are made practical and fun, reflecting the school's commitment to the National Primary Strategy. Consequently, the pupils are highly motivated and secure in the knowledge that their contributions will be valued by adults and other pupils. They are not afraid to make mistakes but, equally, they enjoy succeeding. This was seen to great effect in a Year 1 and 2 class, where the pupils took great delight in hearing very imaginative pieces of writing when planning rhyming poems. On the rare occasions when pupils misbehave, they are dealt with very well by the staff. The teachers plan interesting and exciting activities that capture the pupils' attention and motivate them to do well. The use of class based computers, linked to a network and to the Internet, is proving very effective and there were many examples of their use during the inspection. Their use in English and mathematics during independent and investigative activities or when practising or editing previous work saved on the class file, helps the pupils to consolidate their learning using the power of new technology. Year 2 pupils enjoy, for example, using CD-ROMs to research information or to reinforce their knowledge of numbers facts. Both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils learn how to edit and draft writing and embellish this with creative use of illustrations that are chosen from pre-generated images and electronically pasted next to their writing. Computers, cameras, and recording devices are used imaginatively in many other subjects too including, during the inspection, art and design, music, drama and physical education.
15. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is very good across the school. In the Nursery and Reception years, the early identification and assessment of the children's needs means that those with special educational needs are supported extremely well, enabling them to make very good progress. This continues in Years 1 and 2, where the pupils benefit from a balance of whole class teaching, small group work and individual attention to their areas of difficulty. The teaching assistants play a very important role in ensuring that these pupils are successful in reaching their targets. The teachers work closely with support staff to plan and assess the needs, not just of the pupils with special educational needs, but pupils of all abilities. Across the school, there are very good procedures to assess the pupils and keep a check on their progress, particularly in English and mathematics, but increasingly in other subjects too. The information gathered is used very well to identify areas of strength or weakness in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, to ensure that the work planned meets the needs of pupils of differing ability and to set targets for improvement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very broad. It is inclusive¹, meets statutory requirements, and provides very good quality personal, social and health education. Opportunities for enrichment are very good, as are the school's accommodation and resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities for its pupils.
- There is a very good range of additional activities that stimulate pupils' learning outside class lessons.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

¹ Inclusive refers to the arrangements to meet the educational needs of all pupils, whatever their gender, ability or background.

- The school's curricular provision is enhanced through its close liaison with the adjacent junior school and its very good links with other local cluster schools.

Commentary

16. The curriculum is very well organised and planned, which has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Teachers regularly evaluate their planning and adjust it in the light of their assessment of pupils' needs, to provide continual challenge and a relevant and stimulating curriculum.
17. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and, as a result, their needs are well met. They have full access to the curriculum because the staff are very aware of individual needs. The pupils who need extra help are identified early. The individual education plans for these pupils are well written; the targets are specific and measurable, and pupils' progress in achieving them is closely monitored.
18. The school ensures that all pupils have a very good quality and range of learning opportunities to widen their experiences. The curriculum is greatly enhanced through additional activities outside the school day and a wide variety of visits and visitors to the school. Physical education is significantly enriched by a very good variety of sports that take place after school. Thoroughly planned and delivered science and arts weeks successfully make a considerable influence on the pupils' learning. The team of teaching assistants provides very good and highly skilled support for pupils' learning throughout the school. All are trained to a high standard, and are very well briefed by teachers to ensure that pupils use their time in school effectively. They make valued contributions to the overall quality of learning. There are very good links with the community; for example, local youth workers contribute well to assemblies and an after school liaison worker collates and shares all knowledge of the activities available in the community.
19. The very good accommodation, including the development of the purpose built Nursery provides the pupils with worthwhile opportunities, both inside and outside, for practical activities that promote speaking and listening skills and physical development. The outdoor curricular provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good and makes a valuable contribution to their learning. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' personal, social and health education is very successfully promoted in lessons and throughout the school day. The pupils are often asked their views about their work and the curriculum. The school council are very involved in decisions about resources and activities at break-times and during extra-curricular clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are very good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance and involves pupils well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school looks after its pupils very well; health and safety, and child protection procedures are comprehensive and effective.
- Very good induction² arrangements help children in the Nursery and Reception classes to settle in quickly and to make very good progress from the moment they arrive.
- Teachers provide very good personal and educational support, advice and guidance.
- The school actively encourages pupils to voice their views and acts on their suggestions and preferences whenever possible.

² Induction refers to the arrangements to receive pupils new to the school, to help them settle into school routines and make friends.

Commentary

20. The strengths in care, support and guidance noted in the last report have been maintained and strengthened further; the standard of care provided is now very good. Child protection procedures are thorough and governors keep a vigilant eye on all aspects of health and safety. Members of staff are thoroughly trained and they fully understand their responsibilities.
21. Carefully planned and flexible induction arrangements help children entering the Nursery to get to know their new surroundings and a gradual introduction helps them to settle in quickly. Links with the Aylsham pre-school group are close and incoming children can visit the Nursery and Reception classes several times before they join the school. Every family is also offered a home visit and children are given small tasks; for example, to draw a picture. These opportunities help parents and teachers to swap information and everyone gets to know each other at an early stage. Parents are welcome to stay for initial sessions and, as their children become more confident, leave them for increasing lengths of time. At the end of Year 2, most of the pupils move onto the neighbouring junior school. Pupils regularly visit each other's school and this dovetailing of provision helps to ensure that the pupils involved are sensitively introduced to their new surroundings. This care helps to make the transition at the start of each phase of education as smooth as possible.
22. Procedures for tracking pupils' personal and academic development are thorough and the information obtained is put to very good use. Teachers mark work carefully and keep comprehensive records of pupils' on-going achievements. They note what each pupil can do, along with any particular area of difficulty. This information is used to set specific targets for improvement and pupils have a very good idea of what it is that they have to do in order to improve the standard of their work. During discussions, pupils say that they really like their teachers and are confident they would feel able to ask them for help or advice, should the need arise. This contact helps to ensure that teachers are in a very good position to spot any emerging difficulties and address them at an early stage.
23. The school is interested in what pupils think and teachers encourage them to voice their opinions and to make suggestions. The school council meets every week and pupils know that their comments will be well received. The school is pleased to hear their suggestions and acts upon them whenever it can. For example, pupils have recently requested a 'buddy bench' for the playground and have helped to design a cover for the sand pit.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links between the school and parents are very effective; parents provide strong support for their children's learning.
- Parents are very well informed about day-to-day school life and the progress their children are making.
- Strong links with the community and other schools enrich the curriculum and promote pupils' personal development very well.
- The school actively seeks parents' views and responds to their suggestions or concerns very promptly.

Commentary

24. Links between the school and parents are close and mutually supportive. Parents hold the school in high regard and they are very keen to support their children's education. They ensure that their children attend school regularly and that they arrive in a good frame of mind for learning. Most of the parents also abide by the school's wishes and avoid booking holidays during the school term. Their children's very good attendance helps them to work at a standard that is well above average. Parents also offer generous financial support and the various activities organised by the Friends Association are very well supported. Money raised by the 100 Club, for example, has helped to pay for equipment for use during wet playtimes and willow tunnels for the school grounds. Many parents also help during the school day, with practical activities such as running the school library.
25. Parents receive regular newsletters and these contain plenty of useful information about day-to-day school life. The Nursery also provides its own newsletters and parents receive details of the work their children will be undertaking, along with tips on how to help at home. When children leave the Nursery, their parents receive a copy of their child's 'My Special Book'. This keepsake is a charming record of their child's time in the Nursery and includes photographs, along with examples of their work. There are also three formal opportunities each year when the parents of older pupils can speak to their child's teacher and discuss targets for improvement. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are also close and their attendance at annual review meetings is very good. Parents are invited along to information evenings when parents can learn about particular aspects of the school's work. For example, a session was recently run by a governor on 'brain friendly' learning. In addition, the school has also run four introductory ten-week courses on, "How Children Learn" culminating in many parents graduating and attending a follow-up course on "Supporting Children in the Classroom". All of the courses have been written and devised by a governor who has expertise in this field together with the headteacher who has also enabled the courses to be resourced and facilitated. This helps parents to support their children's education in the most effective way, contributing significantly towards the pupils achieving a standard that is well above the national average in the basic skills of reading, writing and science.
26. Links with the local community are very close. A wide range of visitors contributes to school life and pupils' artwork is displayed in local shops and the town library. Links with local churches are strong and pupils visit local places of interest. Links within the Aylsham High School cluster are strong and teachers regularly share training opportunities and expertise. Although there are no curriculum links with the adjacent junior school, pupils regularly visit their feeder school. Procedures for preparing the move are thorough and sensitive to pupils' individual needs; this helps them to get off to a smooth start when they transfer at the start of Year 3.
27. The school is interested in parents' views and encourages them to be open and frank if they have any suggestions or concerns. Parents appreciate this welcoming approach and analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaire shows that there is very little about the school that they would like to change. Each year, the school includes a questionnaire within the governors' annual report. Their very positive views were backed up by analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaire. Whenever possible, parents' views are acted upon and several are incorporated into the school improvement plan.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership is having a direct impact on the very good quality of teaching and learning and on the standards achieved by the pupils.
- The school's very good climate for learning is stimulated by the leadership's clarity of purpose; its commitment to continual improvement and to raising standards.
- The governors are at the heart of the school's strong drive for improvement.

Commentary

28. The headteacher's energy and determination to improve the very good education that the school provides inspire staff, governors and parents. As a result, the teachers and all other staff work very well as a team and they are keen to improve further the quality of what the school provides for its pupils. This means that there is a constantly strong focus on the very good care that staff give to pupils and a continuing emphasis on enabling them to improve their achievements still further. The careful analysis of assessment information, and the monitoring of teaching and learning, enables them to make a very accurate appraisal of what the school is doing well and identify what it needs to do to continue to improve. The governors and parents rightly value what the headteacher and staff provide for the pupils.
29. The wide-ranging measures for making teaching even better are contributing very well to the rising standards. The school is very good at involving support staff and teaching assistants, as well as teachers, in its very effective efforts to improve teaching. For example, all members of staff attend training days, including those at other schools, often resulting in a very good impact on what the school provides. Teaching assistants are very much a part of the whole team. Staff development is given a high priority. Those new to the profession are enabled to work alongside other, more experienced colleagues to develop their skills. This has resulted in a large proportion of lessons being of very good quality in all classes. The school is highly committed to teacher training through the nationally recognised 'Graduate Teacher Training Programme'. In addition to providing one-to-one support for trainee teachers, the school also hosts training for other Graduate Teachers and the headteacher, in conjunction with another primary school, has written the training programme for Graduate Teachers across Norfolk.
30. The governors are central to the school's efforts to improve and they ensure that all statutory requirements are complied with, including systematic reviews of statutory policies such as those related to child protection and race equality. Their role has developed well since the last inspection and they are now thoroughly involved in monitoring what the school is doing to improve. They have very well organised arrangements for reviewing what has been done so far to meet their priorities and revising their plans accordingly. The members of staff provide very clear information for the governors' committees who, in turn, evaluate the co-ordinators' action plans; they then inform the full governing body. The school has made very good progress in addressing the weaknesses reported in its last inspection. The governors and headteacher have improved resources, particularly the library and the amount and quality of fiction and non-fiction books; standards in information and communication technology have improved very well and the school now provides good quality outdoor provision for children in the Nursery and Reception years. The school improvement plan clearly shows what the school wants to improve, the steps it proposes to take, and who, including governors, will be responsible for ensuring that targets are met. School improvement has been successful in developing the curriculum and in enabling the staff to evaluate how well the pupils are doing. There is a well-expressed vision for the school over the next few years. The school's development plan is sharply focused, showing keen

evaluation of the standards being attained by the pupils and is a very good tool for helping the school to move even further forward.

31. The headteacher and senior staff contribute very well to the school's improvements. Consequently, there is close consistency of practice in the quality and range of teaching across the school. This has been central to the establishment of the very good provision for children in the Nursery and Reception years and the remarkably consistent pattern of very good quality teaching in other classes. All teachers have responsibility for co-ordinating subjects and they make a very good contribution to their development. They have a very good impact on the planning of work and they get a good picture of the standards that the pupils achieve by looking at completed work. They consider carefully what needs to be done to improve the provision in their subjects and the resulting plan that they write informs the school's future development. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very well supported by a designated governor. Governors bring particular skills to the school, including one who has a highly skilled understanding of learning styles which the school makes very good use of in staff development and training. Links with outside agencies are very good and enhance the provision for pupils with special educational needs as well as improving the curriculum and providing enrichment activities and special projects.
32. The balance carried forward to the next financial year exceeds the nationally recommended proportion (five per cent) of the school's expenditure. However, the governors and headteacher are very prudent and sensible when allocating funds given the uncertainties of pupil numbers in the recent past, especially in maintaining part-time provision in the Nursery. Resources are in very good condition and well deployed so the school provides very good value for money given the achievements of the pupils. The headteacher also receives highly effective administrative support which helps the school to run smoothly and efficiently.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	356,627
Total expenditure	371,072
Expenditure per pupil	2,899

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	42,550
Balance carried forward to the next	28,105

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

33. Overall, the provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is **very good**. This is a different judgement from that reported at the time of the last inspection. There have been significant improvements since then. For example, there has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching, the opening of the Nursery and the use and development of the outside area.
34. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve very well and make very good progress in developing and consolidating their skills in all the areas of learning. This is because the staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and as a result the planned activities and the quality of teaching are very good overall. The children are well prepared for the next stage of learning in Year 1 because of the staff's emphasis on the development of their social skills and the promotion of their independence.
35. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. Staff work skilfully as a team, children are regularly assessed and their progress is carefully monitored. By the time children transfer from Reception to Year 1, standards are above average in all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because they enjoy coming to school.
- Clear routines have been established in which the children become secure, settled and happy.
- Children form very good relationships with adults.
- Members of staff provide very good role models.

Commentary

36. The consistent team approach in providing a very well organised setting for learning enables the children to progress well. They enter the school with broadly average social skills. The school has good strategies to develop these, and by the end of the Reception year most children attain standards that are in line with what is typical for their age and many exceed them.
37. The overall very good teaching has a clear impact on learning. The children develop a positive attitude to school and make very good progress because adults are well organised and plan interesting activities. All members of staff, including the teaching assistants, create a calm, secure and purposeful learning environment in which the children thrive and become confident learners. For example, different children take home 'Bailey' the class bear and are expected to draw pictures and share what they did together with the children. In addition, a child is chosen as 'class helper' each day and is given good opportunities to perform simple actions and routines.
38. New children are settled in thoughtfully and successfully and are happy to come to school. With helpful encouragement and sensitive handling they begin to form positive relationships with one another and with adults. Good, firmly understood routines enable the children to settle down very quickly to their tasks. For example, they understand the expectations of behaviour when they self register and change their shoes or their reading books as they enter the classroom. All the members of staff are very good role models so that the children settle quickly and stop immediately what they are doing on a signal from the teacher.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good overall teaching has a positive impact on the children's communication and language skills.
- Resources are well chosen to stimulate interest and motivate learning.

Commentary

39. Children enter the school with a reasonable ability to communicate. Most achieve very well and are on course to exceed the national goals by the end of Reception because they are well taught.
40. A very good emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age. The children are taught to recognise initial sounds. Writing is promoted very well in the different areas in the classroom. An appropriate emphasis is made on the correct formation of letters and holding a pencil in the right way. Teachers continually reinforce the children's understanding and effectively build up their co-ordination and vocabulary. For example, the children in the Nursery hold pencils correctly and can write independently on a large piece of paper.
41. All members of staff, including the teaching assistants, provide ample opportunities for the children to develop these skills with very proficient and clear questioning techniques to help the children to think about what they are doing and to talk to each other and to adults. For example, in a discussion session, the children in the Reception year were taught to phone friends to invite them to a party. The activity was admirably modelled between the teacher and the teaching assistant. In addition, 'snack time' is used very significantly in the Nursery to improve the children's skills by expecting them, for example, to talk about the weather while they eat a piece of fruit. One child said that it was a "*cold and cloudy morning*." These opportunities clearly benefit all the other areas of learning.
42. Activities are well matched to the different needs of the children and resources are carefully chosen to stimulate their interest and encourage learning. Stories are thoughtfully selected to increase the children's literacy skills. For instance, the children in the Reception enjoy listening to stories about birthday parties and this supports the theme for the week, making learning relevant to the children's own experiences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, very good teaching that is well organised and planned.
- Members of staff, including teaching assistants, work very well together.

Commentary

43. Learning is effective because the children have many practical opportunities to enhance their understanding and worthwhile challenges to build on what they have learned. For example, an examination of the children's past work shows that they are usefully introduced to counting and activities to help them order size through the good use of stories. The good collaboration between the teachers and the teaching assistants skilfully reinforce the children's learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and well-planned and stimulating practical activities help the children to develop awareness of the wider world.
- There are good opportunities for using the computer.
- A wide range of visitors enriches the curriculum.

Commentary

44. School records show that the children enter the school with broadly average knowledge of the world around them. Teaching and learning are very effective and all children make very good gains. The majority of the children in the Reception are in line to exceed the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the summer term.
45. The teaching is very good. For example, the children were provided with very good opportunities to mix the ingredients for a birthday cake in preparation for a birthday party: they were very enthusiastic and eager to explain how they made it. An examination of the children's past work in books and photographs show that they are provided with a very good number of relevant experiences to enrich their learning. For example, the visit of a fire engine to the Nursery greatly stimulates the children's interest and attention together with the visit of pupils from the local High School to cook the children Chinese food to help them to celebrate Chinese New Year. Children extend their knowledge of the wider world by visiting a wildlife garden.
46. There are good links with other areas of learning, such as numeracy, as the children use nine 'stickle bricks' to make an object and stick nine candles on a birthday cake outline. Carefully selected computer programs contribute well to the children's learning, so that they show increasing control with the mouse as they are skilfully supported to create, for example, a firework picture.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Carefully planned learning opportunities help to develop the children's skills.
- A wide range of activities is offered daily to promote good physical development, with close adult supervision and guidance.
- Good use is made of the outdoor play area and the school hall.

Commentary

47. Standards in this area of learning are above average because most children are on course to exceed the national goals by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is very good overall, and as a result children achieve very well. Adults ensure that the children are thoroughly involved in building up their physical skills through practical activities that are provided in the hall and in the outside play area. The daily sessions of outdoor play give all children a variety of opportunities to help them develop an understanding of how their body moves, and to control their movements in the space available.
48. Careful planning, well supported by practical activities, helps the children in a Reception class, for example, to recognise the changes that happen when they are active. Songs are well used in the Nursery to help the children to identify different movements, for example, as they draw and dance. The children in the Reception class accurately follow instructions, in showing a good understanding of space. The members of staff model the movements well and this helps them to move with confidence, imagination and safety. The well-chosen resources provide many opportunities for the children to cut, stick, and join objects together, such as when decorating a birthday cake with feathers, sticky shapes and coloured paper. They successfully build on their skills to control and manipulate objects.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many creative and artistic opportunities offered every day, particularly in the Nursery.
- The very good role-play provision in each class links well to other areas of the curriculum.
- The very good adult involvement in all creative activities ensures that children make the best use of these opportunities.

Commentary

49. Indications are that the children are in line to exceed the national goals in this area of learning by the summer. Teachers' planning, photographs of pupils' work and the carefully displayed pieces of work in art and design indicate that children are given a very good range of well planned creative experiences, using a good number of different techniques and materials. For example, they explore colour, texture and shape and have plenty of opportunities for personal expression in, for example, painting, printing, collage, colour mixing and clay model-making activities. The members of staff clearly support all creative activities and ensure that children make the best use of these opportunities. There are good links to literacy as seen in the well-presented displays of work that are linked to familiar stories.
50. Music is well used to stimulate interest and develop the children's listening skills. For example, the children respond positively to the challenge to keep a steady rhythm and use different parts of the body to clap, stamp, click and tap the pulse of a song. Role-play is used successfully, to nurture imagination and to improve spoken language.
51. Role-play areas are thoughtfully set up and build on the children's imagination through the good use of, for example, a Hairdressing Salon in the Nursery and a Birthday Party and puppet-theatre in the Reception year. The admirable involvement of staff, particularly in the hairdressers, brings to life an every day activity that enables the children to act out their own experiences. This makes a very good link with mathematics as they charge their clients, including the headteacher!

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in reading and writing.
- Very good use is made of opportunities to develop writing in other subjects, as well as in English.
- The school develops pupils' listening and speaking skills very well resulting in high standards.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and has improved very well since the last inspection.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

52. The pupils make very good progress in relation to their attainment on entry to Year 1. Their achievement is very good when comparing it with that of pupils in other schools. In the National Curriculum tests in 2004, pupils in Year 2 achieved results which were well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared with those of pupils in similar schools (with a comparable proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals), results were also well above average. Evidence from the inspection suggests that in the current Year 2, standards of reading and writing are well above average for pupils' ages. Standards are improving in line with national trends so the school is doing well to maintain these standards. Pupils enjoy reading from a range of fiction authors and are also able to locate information easily in reference books. This has been enhanced recently with the building of a new and well equipped library. Writing standards remain well above average because the very effective strategies involving drafting, checking and editing and the very good standard of teaching are bringing about sustained improvement. Standards in spelling and punctuation are well above those expected and handwriting is well formed.
53. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school because teachers and support staff provide many opportunities for the pupils to write independently and at length. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject, know what pupils are capable of and use this information to set tasks which are appropriate. As a result, pupils make very good progress in their learning and increasingly enjoy writing stories, poems and factual accounts about a range of topics and subjects in lessons other than English. In an excellent lesson, both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were provided with a range of interesting writing activities based on a humorous story called, "Giraffes Can't Dance". The pupils were taught to write rhyming words and then construct sentences of varying complexity that would form a limerick style poem. Higher attaining pupils, for instance, added adjectives and edited sentences to sharpen up the rhythm of the poem, while less able pupils constructed lists of rhyming words to help them develop their ideas. In another successful lesson, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils focused on changing words into the past tense and could change sentences when writing about news 'in the past'.
54. Throughout the school, teachers provide very good opportunities for speaking and listening. Teachers ensure that pupils speak clearly, for instance when they answer the register or answer questions during lessons. Some lessons are also planned specifically to develop speaking and listening skills. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 were learning how to write instructions and the teacher used very good techniques to encourage the pupils to share ideas. For example, they are used to talking to others in a group (called 'talking partners') so that the pupils are fully engaged in the lesson and are able to agree ideas with a partner and then share them with the class or a group. Drama and role-play feature strongly throughout the school, building on the very good work done in the Foundation

Stage. Year 1 pupils engage in discussion in the mock 'Café' so when learning to write instructions a teaching assistant helps the pupils to 'make a sandwich' and then write about the order of instructions associated with this activity. Year 1 and 2 pupils were entranced during their drama lesson as they improvised the story of Pinocchio and worked out how each character would react in different situations.

55. The subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator together with the headteacher and staff team. Teamwork is a very strong feature of the school. There has been very good progress since the last inspection because there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching, compared with that seen at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher has been instrumental in this staff development process and has enabled all the staff to improve their teaching skills resulting in well above average standards and very good teaching right across the school. There is a detailed action plan which covers all aspects of the subject. The staff have identified relative weaknesses and taken very effective action, for instance by increasing the number and range of reading books; building a bright new library with a good stock of non-fiction reference books; and encouraging role-play, drama and independent writing to feature strongly in English lessons. Teaching and leadership and management of the subject, good at the last inspection, are now very good, and standards are improving as a result.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Teachers make very good use of opportunities to promote language and literacy in all areas of the curriculum. The pupils are able to write independently in subjects such as history, where they compose accounts of how toys have changed since the Victorian days. The pupils produce good writing, for instance, in religious education when they compare the festivals of Hanukkah and Diwali with Advent and Christmas. They also learn to take care over the way they present the findings of their science investigations. Good standards of spelling and punctuation are maintained in all subjects and pupils are also taught to use word processing to present their work attractively using computers.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are very good and assessment is very good.
- The school has made good progress in its provision for the subject since the last inspection.
- The headteacher and staff have taken prompt action to raise standards after a brief period of decline reflected in the national test results.

Commentary

57. Standards have recovered well this year and are above average in Year 2. This is a significant improvement in standards which have been average for the last two years according to the National Curriculum tests in 2003 and 2004. The school has measured the attainment of the pupils on entry to Year 1, which shows that mathematical ability is lower than other areas such as language and communication. Current standards across the school show that the pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Last year's national test results indicate that standards could have been higher given that the same pupils did better in reading, writing and science in the tests. The school has acted on this and identified key areas for improvement and this has resulted in the more able pupils achieving well. Consequently, last year's test results showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) was greater than the previous year. This confirms that the school's strategy has been successful having focused on providing

more specific tasks that match the pupils' needs and abilities. The attainments of pupils in the current Year 2 are above average. The school is well placed to continue its improving trend in test results having identified practical strategies to sustain this improvement in standards and this is reflected in the attainment of pupils in the current Year 1 as well as in Year 2.

58. Teaching and learning are very good. Three very good lessons were observed. Teachers use a wide range of strategies including the skilful use of resources, very good questioning and making learning interesting and practical for the pupils. Resources are very well chosen, as when Year 1 and 2 pupils solved money problems using coins and shopping items to work out change and which coins to use. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject and this helps them to teach confidently and purposefully. They are very good at explaining mathematical ideas to pupils, for example, when partitioning numbers into units, tens and hundreds and then applying this method to coinage to solve money problems. Teachers and very skilled teaching assistants set high expectations of what pupils will learn. Skilful use of assessment information about the pupils' progress enables teachers to provide tasks that are very well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. This makes lessons relevant to pupils of all abilities and tasks are made fun and enjoyable as when the pupils exchanged coins in the role play 'Swap Shop', or finding totals in the 'Cafe'.
59. Subject leadership is very good and a strong contributory factor to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. The staff work very well as a team so they share ideas about how lessons went or how best to make some tasks more effective. Monitoring has been sharp and evaluative so that systematic observations of lessons by all staff are planned as part of the review of mathematics provision each year. This has led to very good teaching across the school and has resulted in a recovery of standards which are now above average and improving. The high quality professional development of teachers and support staff has a positive impact on the guidance that all adults give to the pupils and has resulted in improving standards as well as a determination by the staff to sustain this. Since the previous inspection the school has made good improvement. Teaching has improved and is now very good in all classes.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. There are very good links between mathematics and other subjects. Time lines in history help to develop pupils' sense of chronology effectively. There are very good links with information and communication technology and science. Consequently, the pupils can work out number problems using a range of simulations in computer programs and record data and information during their science investigations as tables and charts. In design and technology, the pupils learn about the properties of different shapes as they design working models using simple templates and in art and design, the pupils paint, print or draw repeating patterns and can identify mathematical characteristics such as symmetry in two-dimensional shapes.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well above average standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve very well at the end of Year 2, which reflects the overall good teaching but teachers' marking does not always indicate how the pupils can improve their work.
- There is very good emphasis in the planning of investigations and experiments, which has been maintained since the last inspection.
- There are good links across the curriculum to support the subject, particularly in English, mathematics, art and information and communication technology.

Commentary

61. Pupils in Year 2 achieved well above average standards in the national tests in 2004. No differences were evident between the achievement of boys and girls: they all achieve well, including those with special educational needs, when taking account of the prior learning. Examination of pupils' work recorded in the current Year 2 books shows that pupils are attaining standards that are well above the expectations for this age group.
62. Although only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both were good. The pupils' past work clearly indicates that there is good teaching across the school. For example, the pupils' scientific enquiry skills are effectively developed through simple experiments and investigations and promote discussion about their scientific ideas: pupils in Year 1 make good progress learning about light sources and agree, "*You need light to see.*" Marking is encouraging and sometimes questions the pupils' thinking but it does not give a clear indication as to how the pupils can improve their work.
63. Good teaching produces good attitudes to work. Teachers manage pupils well. Learning resources are carefully chosen to kindle interest, focus the pupils' attention and develop their curiosity. Scientific language is developed systematically and pupils in Year 2, for example, are encouraged to use technical words accurately, such as electricity, heat, movement, circuit and light. Pupils are also required to explain their ideas and this helps to reinforce their knowledge and understanding and speaking skills through experimentation and enquiry. For example, pupils in Year 1 were asked to investigate and explain how electricity makes things work. One pupil identified that the music player would not work "*because it's unplugged.*"
64. An examination of photographs shows that the pupils enjoyed exciting opportunities to enhance their learning through a thoroughly planned 'Science Day'. The activities included visiting the wildlife area to collect frogspawn and then investigating the life cycle of the frog; using pushes and pulls to change the shapes of biscuits; and mixing paint to see the colour changes and investigating the solar system through a space station. The subject is well supported by other areas of the curriculum. For example, in an experiment set up in a Year 1 and 2 class about sorting fruit and vegetables, the pupils use their mathematical skills to group them according to size, colour and shape: they use their information and communication technology skills to make sentences from a prepared grid and their English skills to record their findings. For example, "*A lamp gives us light so we can see.*" Science is effectively and efficiently led and managed because there has been good progress since the last inspection in maintaining standards and improving resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made very good progress since its last inspection.
- The pupils now achieve very well throughout the school and standards are above average by the end of Years 2.
- The subject is very well managed and resources well used and deployed.

Commentary

65. The school has developed and improved the curriculum since the last inspection, resulting in above average standards. From the work that the pupils do using computers in a range of subjects, it is clear that standards are improving throughout the school. Pupils of all abilities achieve very well in lessons and printed work displayed around the school indicates that the pupils are making good use of their skills to help their learning in other subjects. The work includes Year 1 and 2 pupils combining text and pictures to produce stories; experimenting with different styles of text to produce posters; using controlling and modelling skills to present information; and simple graphs and charts that present data as part of surveys or investigations. Throughout the school, the pupils demonstrate how well they acquire skills such as word processing and graphics and are adept at combining these to edit and improve the presentations of stories and written accounts.
66. The teaching is very good, with particularly skilful support and teaching provided by the headteacher. Her skilful intervention and support of the staff has led to a very good rate of improvement since the last inspection. The leadership and management of the subject are very effective, with efficient use of the school's resources to enable teachers and support staff to fully utilise computers and programmable robotic devices. There are advanced plans in place to enhance information and communication technology resources with interactive whiteboards and a projector to improve the use of new technology across the curriculum. The teaching is clearly having an impact on pupils' learning so that, for example, the pupils can observe, control a device or screen 'turtle'; plan a story using editing and word processing skills and load and save files.
67. The pupils achieve very well because there is a cross-curricular approach to the subject and the teaching is particularly effective at combining the skills the pupils acquire with those in other subjects. This was demonstrated in a Year 1 and 2 English lesson when the pupils continue their reading and writing work to produce sentences using a word processing program or when the pupils reinforced their number skills in a mathematics lesson by practising their addition facts using a simulation program. Very good quality support is provided for pupils with special educational needs as when a group of Year 2 pupils experimented with simple writing frames on the computer to help them construct sentences.
68. Other work covered across the school includes a good range of turtle graphics and sequencing work, and the teaching observed is particularly skilful in helping the pupils to use control technology to program and sequence information. The pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress and achieve very well. They are usually well supported by teaching assistants, especially when working on one of the class computers. The school is also good at grouping pupils so that more able pupils are on hand to help those who need additional support. This improves the knowledge and understanding and skills of both the more able pupils and those who find it difficult to grasp key skills the first time of trying.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The school makes very good use of information and communication technology across a broad range of subjects. There are many examples of computers being used in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. These include imaginative and descriptive accounts presented using a very good range of word processing skills. The Internet and research using CD-ROMs are used to very good effect to help the pupils find information. Mathematics skills are used very well to help the pupils calculate totals and apply number facts. Graphical representations of data are displayed in most classrooms using computer generated graphs. There has been very good progress since the last inspection in this aspect of the school's work.

HUMANITIES

70. There was no opportunity to observe **geography** lessons during the inspection and no judgement can be made on provision or standards in the subject. Some pupils' work was available for analysis from Years 1 and 2. Very good use is made of the fictional 'Barnaby Bear' to help the pupils identify some features of other countries, including European and beyond. Barnaby is a popular attraction and helps the pupils to talk and write about places outside their immediate area, for example, places they have visited on holiday. Evidence from the sample of pupils' work shows that the work is regularly marked and indicates to pupils how they might improve. Teachers use the school site and visits further away creatively for surveys. These make the subject more interesting, and give pupils appropriate experience to use in their work. Teachers assess the pupils' geography work regularly to check that they make sufficient progress.
71. Only parts of two lessons were observed in **history**. By Year 2, pupils of all abilities understand how things change over time. This is reinforced as they compare the toys of their parents and grandparents with their own. The pupils' work and discussions with them show that as they move through the school they develop a good understanding of the past through their learning about past events such as the Gunpowder Plot and the role played by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War. Learning in history is enlivened and enriched by a range of visits and visitors to the school. In both history and geography very good use is made of computers to reinforce learning and for research into the topics.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for the pupils' to improve their awareness of other religious customs and traditions.
- There are some very good elements in the quality of teaching.
- Assemblies make a good contribution to the subject.
- The subject effectively enhances the pupils' spiritual development.

Commentary

72. Standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection. Standards of attainment in Year 2 are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for Norfolk schools. This judgement is gleaned from the evidence available in the scrutiny of pupils' past work in books, two lesson observations and discussion with the subject leader. This indicates that pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
73. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with some very good elements. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. Very good teaching has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning by promoting their thinking skills. For example, skilful questioning effectively consolidates the pupils' previous learning and probes their knowledge and understanding of, for example, the meaning of Advent in Year 1 and 2. Good teaching is stimulating and facilitates the pupils' understanding of many features of the Christian faith, its culture and traditions. The teachers' secure subject knowledge and clear exposition ensure that the pupils in Year 1 begin to understand that there are times when they prepare for something special to happen and "*Christians are getting ready for Christmas.*" The scrutiny of pupils' past work indicates that pupils in Year 2 are learning to reflect on, for example, belonging to a family. They make a scroll that is effectively linked to Judaism. This makes an effective contribution to their spiritual development. One pupil wrote, "*My home is special because I feel loved and cared for.*"

74. The school places good emphasis on caring for others and helping pupils to recognise the importance of relationships. This has a positive impact on their learning. Assemblies and visits to local churches together with visits from representatives of different churches and community youth workers, help to develop pupils' emerging understanding of faith. The subject is very well led and planning takes appropriate account of the locally agreed syllabus for Norfolk schools.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. As only one lesson was observed in **art and design** and **music** and none in **design and technology** during the inspection there was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about provision, teaching and learning or standards in design and technology and music.
76. In **art and design**, the pupils achieve well, producing work to a higher standard than that seen at the time of the last inspection. One of the noteworthy features of a good lesson observed in this subject was the good building up of the pupils' skills and techniques through the well thought out activities and the provision of well-chosen and stimulating resources. For example, pupils in Year 2 are learning to look closely at the work of a famous local artist and to copy his style. Bright, attractive and stimulating displays are a good feature of the school. Pupils use a wide variety of media, including paint, pastels, crayons, weaving, printing, batik, tissue collage and clay. Work is planned jointly across the year group but each class interprets the activity in a different way. The Arts Week planned in co-operation with the local cluster of schools and the artist in residence successfully provided the pupils with additional inspiration and helped to raise standards. It is evident from the scrutiny of the pupils' work on display that much of art and design is done to support the other subjects of the curriculum.
77. In **music**, pupils sing enthusiastically and tunefully in assemblies. In the one lesson observed, which had good elements in it the pupils expressed enjoyment. Good opportunities were provided to improve the pupils' listening skills, for example, through identifying different duck sounds on a CD to represent pitch. An examination of photographs of past events shows very good additional experiences enhance the curriculum.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils experience a good range of activities, they enjoy physical education lessons and work hard.
- The pupils achieve standards that are well above those expected for their age because the teaching is very well organised and builds on previous lessons very well.

Commentary

78. Standards are well above average and achievement is very good overall. The planned curriculum ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and the school does very well to enhance the subject with extra-curricular activities.
79. The quality of teaching is very good because lessons are taught at a very good pace with activities that build up the pupils' confidence and skill as they learn to hold a balance and combine movements in gymnastics to form simple sequences. The pupils respond very well and most of them achieve very well, as they work at mastering and improving different balances by changing posture and adapting body movements. These aspects of physical education were observed in all the lessons seen so that both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were

challenged as they practised moving through and over apparatus, holding a balance and then moving on to more challenging movements. Strengths of the teaching are the teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm which are conveyed to the pupils.

80. Teachers assess how the pupils perform their balances and sequences of movements and then ask them to demonstrate these. This has the effect of improving the performance of pupils of all abilities. Achievement is very good and this is best illustrated when observing how well the Year 1 pupils perform different balances of increasing complexity and then comparing this level of performance with that seen by Year 2 pupils. A common strength of all the teaching was the way in which the teachers intervened throughout the lessons to develop and extend the pupils' skills.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are very good and have ensured that there is a very good range of resources and facilities available for all aspects of the subject that matches the needs of pupils in this age range. There has been very good progress since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. The school has a well established and positive ethos that encourages the pupils to respect others and to help and support in the community. Personal, social and health education issues are often linked to whole school themes, assemblies and to topics in religious education. In some lessons, the pupils talk or write about health and safety matters or moral issues that provide opportunities for the pupils to learn right from wrong. Very good use is made of visual prompts, illustrations and storybooks help the pupils to relate to, say, fictional characters and ask questions about how they ought to behave or respond. Bullying is discussed in some sessions and tolerance of other faiths and cultures is continually encouraged in religious education and special topics as well as humanities studies such as in geography and history. Class discussions, assemblies and lessons provide many opportunities for the pupils to share ideas, to listen to others and to respect their point of view. Personal, social and health education lessons and those in most other subjects help to raise self-esteem and confidence, especially when pupils speak to a group or the whole class. Very good use is made of drama and role-play to help the pupils relate to the views of others and to prompt questions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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