

INSPECTION REPORT

SPARHAWK FIRST SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Sprowston, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120999

Headteacher: Miss Carina Ingham

Lead inspector: Mr Martin Newell

Dates of inspection: 31st January – 2nd February 2005

Inspection number: 267706

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First school
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 - 8
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 99

School address: Sparhawk Avenue
Sprowston
Norwich
Norfolk

Postcode: NR7 8BU

Telephone number: 01603 406406
Fax number: 01603 406406

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr David Brown

Date of previous inspection: 26th March 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated about four miles from the city centre of Norwich. The school gained a Healthy Schools Award in 2004 and Investors in People recognition in 2003. There are 99 pupils on roll, which includes 29 children that attend the school's nursery on a part-time basis. There is a higher percentage of boys attending the school than girls. The level of pupil mobility at the school is higher than the national average. Although most pupils that attend the school are of white ethnic origin, a small percentage of pupils are from different ethnic backgrounds and are at an early stage of acquiring English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs stands at 17 per cent, and this is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is well above the national average. The nature of special educational needs includes profound and multiple learning, social and emotional, speech and communication, hearing impairment, autistic and Down's syndrome. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average at 7 per cent. Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range, but is below average overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Martin Newell	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Special educational needs English Religious education Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship
15181	Meg Hackney	Lay inspector	
10611	Martin James	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Science Geography History
32540	Tony Fermor	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with some very good features. Pupils attain good standards in the core subjects by the time that they leave school, and achievement across the school is good. Teaching and learning are good and at times better. The school is well led and managed with particular strengths in the leadership qualities of the headteacher. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the headteacher have played a significant role in helping to improve the school.
- The good quality of teaching across the school, together with the very good support of the teaching assistants and very good enrichment opportunities, enables all children and pupils to achieve well.
- The school is very inclusive, recognises the uniqueness of the individual and provides very well for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils whose first language is not English.
- Assessment, target-setting and tracking procedures are not good enough.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school add much to the positive learning environment.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education and for their cultural development.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute formally to the decision-making processes of the school, to take responsibility for their own learning or to set and review their own targets for improvement.
- The school has established particularly good links with other schools, which impact well on learning.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good because there have been significant improvements in standards, how well pupils achieve, teaching and learning, and behaviour. In addition, the role that the governing body plays in the strategic management of the school is now good and financial planning is effective.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 2 results

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

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

Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-3 achieve **well**. The above table shows that on the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in reading, above average in writing and in line with the national average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science showed attainment to be in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools, attainment was above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. Inspection findings show that attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science is at an average level. These findings do not suggest that standards have fallen, but reflect the different natural abilities of the different groups of pupils. The important factor is that pupils achieve well in these subjects. Standards in religious education by the end of Year 2 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and achievement is good. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level, and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory, except in music where standards are above average and achievement is good.

Inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 3, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average, and all pupils achieve well. Standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education, and pupils achieve well. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in music are above average and achievement is good. Standards in gymnastics are above average and pupils achieve well in this aspect of the subject. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement is never less than satisfactory.

Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range, fluctuates from year to year, but is below average overall. Children make good progress and achieve well, and by the time that they are ready to start in Year 1, most have attained the nationally recommended early learning goals in all areas of learning.

The very inclusive nature of the school means that pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English achieve as well as their classmates, due, in no small part, to the very supportive role played by teaching assistants across the school.

Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** with pupils' cultural development very good. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils' attitudes to school and all that it has to offer are good, although there is scope for further development in the role that they play in their own learning and target-setting. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall across the school, and at times teaching is very good. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is successful because it provides a lot of good quality, practical, hands-on learning experiences alongside the direct teaching of key skills. Teaching in Years 1-3 is often well-paced, challenging and well-structured, but at the same time makes learning fun. Assessment is satisfactory, but pupil tracking and target-setting and the marking of pupils' work are not rigorous enough to have the biggest possible impact on how well pupils achieve. The curriculum is good and is enhanced by a very good range of visits, visitors and other extracurricular activities.

The provision made for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils is very good, and the school does much to celebrate the individuality of all pupils. Although pupils' views and voices are listened to well, the school has accurately identified the need for pupils to play a more proactive role in contributing to the life of the school as a community and the decision-making processes of the school. The school has established good links with parents and the community and very good links with other schools. These links bring an added dimension to pupils' learning experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well and has played a pivotal role in moving the school forward. She has a very good grasp of the school's strengths, but equally knows exactly what is needed to improve the school still further. She is very well supported by a dedicated and committed team of teaching and non-teaching staff who, along with the headteacher, share a common desire to provide a good quality of education for all pupils. Management of the school is good. The core subjects, the Foundation Stage and other key aspects of school life are led and managed well. Governance of the school is good and governors now make an important and valued contribution to the management of the school. The governing body ensures that the school's statutory responsibilities are met in full.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and value and are appreciative of the quality of education that is provided. Parents are more than happy with how well their children achieve, as well as their behaviour and the learning activities that are on offer. A significant minority of parents would welcome more information about how well their child is doing. The school is currently looking at this aspect of school life, and inspection findings confirm that pupils' reports are descriptive rather than evaluative. Extensive discussions with pupils show that they really enjoy school and the many different activities on offer. Pupils feel that their views and voices are listened to and are looking forward to the setting up of the proposed school council, which they feel will give them an even louder and more important voice. Discussions also indicated that pupils do not feel that bullying is an issue in school at all and they feel very confident and assured that, should it occur, it would be stamped out quickly but sensitively.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Instigate rigorous procedures for the setting and reviewing of targets for individual pupils and make them aware of what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the quality of the marking of pupils' work and extend procedures for assessing pupils' progress to all subjects.
- Enable pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning and extend opportunities for them to contribute formally to the decision-making processes and improvement of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards overall are **average** by the end of Year 2 and **above average** by the time that pupils leave school at the end of Year 3. Across the school, from nursery to Year 3, children and pupils achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils in Years 1-3 achieve well, particularly in the core subjects.
- The very inclusive nature of the school means that pupils with special educational needs, pupils whose first language is not English and gifted and talented pupils achieve as well as their classmates.

Commentary

FOUNDATION STAGE

1. The attainment levels, when children start at the school, fluctuate from year to year and cover the full ability range, but are below average overall. The good quality teaching that children benefit from enables all children to make good progress and achieve well in both the nursery and reception classes. By the time that children are ready to start in Year 1, attainment is at an expected level because most children have reached the nationally recommended early learning goals across all areas of learning.

KEY STAGE 1

2. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in reading, above average in writing and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, attainment was above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. The trend in improvement of the school between 2000 and 2004 is above the national trend. Inspection findings indicate that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are at an average level. This does not suggest that standards have fallen since 2004, but reflects the fact that the present Year 2 pupils started school with much lower levels of attainment than other groups of pupils. The important factor is that inspection evidence clearly indicates that pupils in Years 1-2 achieve well in these subjects because of the good teaching. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and achievement is good. Standards in information and communication technology and all other inspected subjects are at an average level, and achievement is satisfactory, except in music where standards are above average and all pupils achieve well. There is no significant evidence of differences in the achievement of boys and girls in any subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.4 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.7 (13.0)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.6 (15.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

KEY STAGE 2

- Inspection findings indicate that by the time that pupils leave school at the end of Year 3, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science, and all pupils achieve well. The good progress that pupils make owes much to the good quality of teaching. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and achievement is good. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in music are above average with pupils achieving well. Although standards in physical education are satisfactory overall, standards in gymnastics are good and pupils achieve well in this aspect of the subject. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level, and achievement is never less than satisfactory. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls in any subjects.
- The school is a very inclusive school which seeks to ensure that the needs of pupils are met well and that all pupils are given equal access to every aspect of the curriculum. These are factors which help to ensure that, across the school, children and pupils with special educational needs and the small number of pupils whose first language is not English, take an active role in all that the school has to offer and that their achievement is similar to that of their classmates.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **good**. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners who find learning fun and want to do well.
- The good and at times very good standards of behaviour add much to the learning ethos of the school.
- The school sets high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and bullying is a rare occurrence.
- The school is very successful at raising pupils' awareness of different faiths and cultures.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to contribute to target-setting or to take a greater level of responsibility for their own learning.
- After falling over time, attendance rates are now improving well.

Commentary

- All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have good attitudes to school, with many pupils having

very good attitudes. Children in the Foundation Stage have very positive attitudes to learning, and this enables them to very quickly adapt to the expectations that the school sets. In Years 1-3, boys and girls work well together, and all pupils are fully included in the life and work of the school. Pupils say they enjoy life in this school because work is interesting and often exciting, and because the school is a welcoming place. Pupils want to please and to achieve well. They are happy in school and parents support this view. The school has increasingly placed a very strong emphasis on improving pupils' attitudes, and its efforts have been most successful. Both attitudes and behaviour are much improved since the time of the last inspection.

6. Behaviour is good overall, and that of a number of pupils is very good. This is because the school places such a positive emphasis on good behaviour, courtesy and caring for others, and the pupils respond well. All these things are frequently celebrated in the school, with the pupils regularly being praised for maintaining the high standards. Pupils are well supported in lessons, and they respond accordingly by working hard, concentrating well and persevering in both independent and group work. Discussions are used effectively to talk about and resolve any disagreements that might arise, and to reflect on the importance of working and playing well together. Pupils say that, as a result of this, the school is a friendly place where bullying is not an issue. Discussions with pupils clearly show that, should bullying occur, they are very confident that it would be dealt with quickly but sensitively. There have been no exclusions during the last twelve months.
7. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, with cultural development being very good. School assemblies are used particularly well for enhancing pupils' spiritual awareness and for the telling of stories with a high spiritual content. Moments of calm and peace are often in evidence, and in both lessons and assemblies, pupils are provided with moments of quietness to reflect on all they hear. Much social responsibility is invested in pupils because they are asked to carry out a good range of tasks and responsibilities around the school and they respond with commitment and maturity. However, they are currently given fewer opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning or to help set their own targets for improvement. The school nurtures pupils' moral development well through assemblies and through many class and group discussions that cover a wide range of issues. This all helps pupils to gain a good sense of fairness and to recognise the difference between right and wrong. The school makes very good provision for making pupils aware of the multicultural society in which they live. Lessons in various subjects, such as religious education, art and design, and music, together with visits and visitors to the school and displays of pictures and artefacts, all contribute significantly to providing pupils with a very good understanding and insight into many different faiths and cultures from around the world.

Attendance

8. The school works hard to improve attendance, and although official data shows that last year rates were below the national average, these have improved well this academic year and are now much more closely aligned to the picture nationally. Good procedures are followed to remind parents of the effect that good attendance has on their children's progress. However, the school does not have an established system of first day call to parents to promptly monitor all unauthorised absence on a daily basis. The school is already addressing this issue. Too many pupils take holidays during term time, and this has a negative effect on the school's endeavours to improve attendance still further. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.0	School data:	0.2
National data:	5.5	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 school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good** and assessment is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **good** with **very good** opportunities provided to enrich pupils' learning outside of the formal curriculum. The accommodation and resources are **good**. The provision made for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**. Links with parents and the community are **good** and with other schools **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start to their educational lives, and reading and writing skills are taught well in Years 1-3.
- Teaching in mathematics and science provides pupils with good opportunities to learn through practical and investigative tasks.
- Teaching initiatives aimed at improving speaking and listening skills have been successful.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to how well pupils learn and achieve.
- The direct teaching of key skills brings an added dimension to pupils' learning in different subjects.
- Target-setting procedures, procedures for tracking pupils' progress in some subjects and the marking of pupils' work are not yet rigorous enough.
- Computers are not always used as well as they could be to enhance learning in different subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	17	1	0	0	0

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

9. Teaching and learning are good overall and at times very good, and this contributes much to achievement across the school. Teaching has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and is now a strength of the school.
10. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage, which includes both nursery and reception classes. All staff in the Foundation Stage work together well to help provide a vibrant range of learning opportunities for the children. Staff are keen to offer children lots of opportunities to learn through practical, hands-on tasks alongside the direct teaching of key skills. At the same time, children are given the chance to lead and initiate their own learning activities. All these factors, together with the very good relationships that are quickly established between adults and children, ensure that children get off to a flying start in their educational lives.
11. Teaching is good overall and at times very good in Years 1-3. There are strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science. The rise in standards in reading and writing owes much to the good quality of teaching. Reading skills are directly taught well to pupils from an early age. These skills enable pupils to leave school as confident readers. In writing, pupils are taught the importance of being technically accurate. Pupils are also well taught how to write for a range of different audiences and purposes. Teaching is at times very good in this aspect of the subject. The school has placed much emphasis on improving pupils' speaking and listening, and the efforts have proved most successful as standards have risen.
12. Teaching is good in mathematics and science. In mathematics, the tasks that are set are often challenging. Many good quality opportunities are on offer for pupils to develop their numeracy and mental agility skills, and pupils are often then expected to put these skills to the test in investigative and problem-solving tasks which really get them thinking. Teaching in mathematics is at times very good. Teaching in science is effective because it strikes a good balance between developing pupils' practical and experimental skills alongside the systematic acquisition of a good body of scientific knowledge. When teaching is very good, pupils are expected to use their knowledge well to help them make accurate predictions and hypotheses or to explain, using a good technical vocabulary, why things happen as they do.
13. There are strengths in teaching and learning in other subjects. In religious education, the use of visits, visitors and the coverage of different world faiths add much to pupils' cultural development, as well as heightening their religious awareness. In art and design, pupils are provided with opportunities to work with a wide range of materials, to learn skills, such as shading, developing perspective and to explore art from around the world. In information and communication technology, increasingly good use is being made of the computer suite to directly teach new skills and tasks are often challenging but fun. There are, however, times when computers in the classrooms are not used enough to put these newly learnt skills to the test or to support and enhance learning in different subjects. Geography teaching is used well to raise pupils' awareness of issues such as poverty and pollution, and in history, the use of artefacts and role-play activities have been put to good effect to enliven teaching. Teaching is good in music as it introduces pupils to music and

instruments from around the world and teachers' good subject knowledge not only motivates the pupils but also ensures that pupils are confidently taught about performance, composing and music appraisal. Teaching is good in physical education because skills which help to enhance pupils' performances are taught in a direct manner and pupils are then given time to refine and improve their actions and movements.

14. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and at times very good. Work is consistently well matched to the individual needs of the pupils and individual education plans are good because the targets that are set and reviewed regularly are challenging but realistic. Teaching assistants provide a high quality of support for these pupils and are a major factor as to why these pupils achieve as well as their classmates. The support that they provide is sensitive to the needs of the pupils but they set high expectations as to the quality and quantity of the work that pupils are to produce and to the contribution that pupils make to lessons. Teaching for pupils whose first language is not English is good and enables pupils to have full access to the curriculum and to contribute fully to the life of the school as a community.
15. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science, and test and assessment data is analysed well. The weaker aspect is that the information is not used rigorously enough for setting targets for individual pupils or to closely track pupils' progress towards these targets and ask challenging questions if the target has not been achieved. Although pupils' work is marked on a regular basis, marking does not always outline what a pupil needs to do to improve or what is needed to achieve at a higher level. This prevents learning from being stronger. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is also satisfactory, but the good quality information gained from assessing what children can or cannot do is not always used to guide and inform curriculum planning. The school is currently developing a more formal and rigorous approach to the tracking of pupils' progress in the foundation subjects. A good quality format is being trialled in history, and if rigorously pursued, it could form a good model for other subjects.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum. The way the school enriches the curriculum is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is carefully planned to provide a good range of learning opportunities for all year groups.
- Speaking and listening skills, writing and mathematical skills are promoted well across the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, impacts very well on their learning.
- There is a very good range of visits, visitors and extracurricular activities that enrich the curriculum.
- The school's good number of support staff, attractive accommodation and good quality resources are used well to enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

16. The school provides a good curriculum for children and pupils of all ages. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a good range of activities across all areas of learning. The curriculum on offer ensures that a good balance is struck between the direct teaching of key skills and opportunities for children to learn through practical, hands-on and investigative tasks. In Years 1-3, the numeracy and literacy strategies are well embedded in the school curriculum. The time that is allocated to different subjects is well thought out and balanced, and planning for all subjects is detailed and thorough. Foundation subjects are taught within cross-curricular topics. Teachers plan these topics carefully to ensure key skills underpin learning. Teachers review topics together twice a year. They then plan future topics to ensure that learning builds on previous key skills that have been learnt. The school teaches philosophy on a weekly basis, and this contributes much to the very good provision that is made for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship. The quality of curriculum provision promotes a good level of enthusiasm in pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Improvement has been good since the last inspection.
17. In many subjects, pupils are actively encouraged to express and justify their views and to reflect on what others have said before responding. This gives pupils the confidence to become actively engaged in their learning by asking and answering questions and taking part in discussions. Teachers capitalise well on opportunities that arise to develop pupils' writing and mathematical skills in subjects, such as science, history, design and technology and religious education, and pupils see the relevance of putting their skills to the test in meaningful contexts.
18. Very good early identification procedures are in place to pick up pupils with special educational needs, and support is targeted to where the need is greatest. Pupils' individual education plans are of a good standard and are reviewed regularly with parents and all adults that work with the pupil. The provision ensures that the needs of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are met in full. The links with outside support agencies are very good and are used to best effect to help fulfil pupils' personal, social and academic needs. Equally good procedures are in place for supporting pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has recently established a register of gifted and talented pupils, and consistently provides work that is challenging enough for them. The very good commitment that the school shows to inclusion means that all pupils are fully involved in all that the school has to offer and importantly ensures that all pupils achieve equally well, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity.
19. The school provides a very good range of extracurricular and enrichment activities that bring another dimension to pupils' learning. Visits and events are planned to provide first-hand experiences relating to learning in lessons. Year 2 pupils visited St Cuthbert's Church and recorded what they learnt about church artefacts by drawing and by using the digital camera. Pupils grew sunflowers in the school garden and won the Norwich in Bloom competition. Year 3 pupils are involved in a residential visit and develop outdoor pursuit skills. Visitors to the school bring learning alive. Year 2 and 3 pupils enthused about the visit of a World War 2 veteran, who came to talk about the war and sounded an air-raid siren. The pupils felt they understood better what life must have been like during this period of history. The pupils' awareness of different cultures has

been enhanced by the visit of an author during World Book Week and the opportunity to take part in an African Dance Workshop and circus skills activities. There is a very good range of extracurricular clubs, including football for boys and girls, recorder, guitar and French Club.

20. The school's good accommodation is used well by staff to support learning. The purpose-built nursery and spacious outside enclosed areas ensure an attractive learning environment. All classrooms are spacious and well organised to suit different learning activities. There is a good quality computer suite and a large hall used for assemblies, lunches and physical education. The caretaker takes pride in maintaining a safe and clean environment. Staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum. Very good levels of support staff are deployed very well to support pupils. The range and quality of resources are good and add much to pupils' learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Pupils receive **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance based on monitoring. Pupils are provided with **good** opportunities to share their views about the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a happy and safe environment where pupils are very well cared for.
- Health and safety issues are dealt with promptly through very good procedures.
- Trusting relationships support pupils' individual needs well.
- There is no formal system to monitor pupils' personal development.
- Very good induction arrangements help children to settle happily into school routines.
- Pupils are encouraged to contribute their ideas for improvements to the school environment.

Commentary

21. The school is committed to providing a safe and happy learning environment for pupils, and many of the strengths in this area of school life have been maintained since the last inspection. Parents are confident that their children are well cared for by teachers and learning support assistants whilst they are in school. Rigorous procedures are in place to ensure that all issues of health and safety are well monitored and dealt with promptly. Child protection procedures are very good and all staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are fully aware of their responsibilities. Pupils have very trusting relationships with the staff, and this helps them to learn and to make good progress.
22. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in the core subjects, but the information is not always used as well as it could be to inform the target-setting process. Although staff know pupils very well, there is no formal system to ensure that pupils' personal development is systematically recorded and used to set individual targets to help pupils to improve. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support through well organised individual education plans which are reviewed regularly. Learning support assistants provide good support for individual pupils and groups during lessons, and this ensures that all pupils are included in the full range of

activities. Induction arrangements are very good as children move from the nursery into the reception class. The school works closely with parents to ensure that they are well informed and involved and that pupils settle down quickly.

23. During assemblies and PSHE lessons, pupils are encouraged to discuss issues and ideas to improve the school's activities and resources. Pupils have helped to develop the adventure playground and garden, of which they are proud and keen to keep in good order. The school recognises that the proposed school council will further extend the opportunity for all pupils to have a strong voice in the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **good**. Links are **very good** with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcomes parents and is committed to working closely with them.
- Parents' views are sought and valued in the development of the school's work.
- The Family Learning Programme provides good opportunities for parental support at home.
- Regular communication keeps parents well informed about school events and activities.
- Reports on pupils' attainment and progress do not always give a clear enough picture as to how well pupils are doing.
- Links with the community and other schools enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

24. Links with parents, the community and other schools are much improved since the last inspection. The school encourages a strong partnership with parents to support pupils' learning. Parents have every confidence in the school and they are very satisfied with the quality of education provided. Most parents are very supportive and they are almost unanimous in their view that they find the school approachable and helpful. Parents value the fact that their views are sought and, where possible, are included in the school's development plan. The school benefits from the support of a group of parents who help regularly in classrooms and with other activities. The Family Learning Programme is good and has successfully provided literacy and numeracy workshops which involved a significant number of interested parents. The Friends of Sparhawk School Association (FOSSA) are very active and organise regular fund-raising events to provide the school with a wide range of additional resources.
25. Parents are satisfied that they are kept well informed about the school's activities through regular newsletters. The parents' notice board and suggestion box, located close to the main entrance, is welcoming to parents and provides them with a good amount of helpful information about the school and local events. However, parents would like more information about what is being taught and their children's progress and levels of achievement. The inspection confirms that the reports to parents are often descriptive rather than evaluative and there are inconsistencies between subjects in the amount of clear information provided about progress.

26. The school's partnership with the community helps to foster pupils' personal development and experience. The headteacher is proactive in exploring community opportunities in developing the school's provision. The school is currently liaising with a local law firm that is volunteering the staff's support as reading partners for pupils. The Sprowston Heritage Group supports the curriculum well, and pupils benefit from regular visitors to talk about special topics. There are close links with the church, including regular visits from clergy to lead assemblies and opportunities for pupils to visit the church for concerts and to use the ancient building as a learning resource. Pupils have recently successfully participated in the Norwich in Bloom competition.
27. The very good links with other schools make a considerable contribution to the quality of education and pupils' development. The school works closely with the middle school to which most pupils transfer, and this supports the transition of pupils very well through shared information and regular joint curriculum activities. A good number of students from the local high school, the University of East Anglia and City College spend time in the school during their work experience placements and teaching practice and add to the quality of pupils' learning experiences. The teaching and learning in science have been improved by pupils' participation in science workshops, working with visiting scientists and older pupils from the middle school and high school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. Leadership of key staff is **good**. Governance of the school is **good**. Management is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has made a significant contribution to improving the school and leads the school very well.
- There is a strong team spirit amongst all staff who have a shared desire to provide a good quality of education for all pupils.
- The core subjects and other key aspects of school life are well led and managed.
- Leadership of the school is deeply committed to inclusion.
- The governors play an effective role in the strategic management of the school.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

28. The headteacher provides very astute and clear leadership, and manages the school very well. She has played a pivotal role in improving the school over the last three years and has tackled its weaknesses in a rigorous and effective manner. Through a well-structured programme of lesson observations, the headteacher, with good support from the Local Education Authority, has been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements in teaching to such an extent that teaching is now a strength of the school. She has been very successful in moulding together a team of staff who share her fervent desire to provide the best that they can for all pupils. Her leadership style and successes in managing the school have gained her the full respect of staff, pupils, governors and parents. All staff are actively involved in drawing up plans for school improvement, and teaching staff play an effective role in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work.

29. The leadership and management of key staff are good. Leaders of the core subjects play a proactive role in monitoring standards, teaching and learning. Teachers carry out lesson observations and scrutinise teachers' planning and pupils' work. Through this process, action plans are drawn up for individual subjects and any identified weaknesses are built into the school improvement plan and subsequently tackled well. These procedures are more advanced in the core subjects than in the foundation subjects, but monitoring and evaluating in the foundation subjects are never less than satisfactory. Test and assessment data are analysed well by the headteacher and subject leaders, and the information is used well to set priorities for improvement. However, the school has rightly identified the need for a more rigorous approach to be adopted for target-setting so that the achievement of pupils can be improved still further. Overall, however, the rigorous programme that has been established for the headteacher and subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning across the school has played an important role in helping to raise standards.
30. The school is committed to the inclusion of all pupils in everything that it has to offer. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Leadership of these aspects of school life is influential in ensuring that these pupils receive good levels of well targeted support from both within the school and from outside agencies when necessary. Importantly, this enables pupils to have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed as it ensures that all staff work together well, that teaching and learning are monitored well, that the curriculum is well geared to how young children learn best and that relationships and partnership with parents are strong.
31. Governance of the school is good and has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. The governors have a clear structure of committees in place that meet regularly to review the work of the school and to ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met in full. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors have a good grasp of standards and achievement and, although very supportive of the work of the school, they ask challenging questions of the headteacher and staff and play an effective role in holding the school to account for the quality of education that it provides. Governors regularly visit the school on a formal and informal basis and outcomes of formal visits are recorded and fed back to the full governing body. Good use is made of governors' professional skills to support the school. Governors play an active role in the strategic management of the school and contribute well to drawing up the school improvement plan. They regularly attend training courses, and this allows them to set the work of the school in a national, local and regional context.
32. The day-to-day management of the budget is very good. There are good procedures for financial management and good long-term financial planning systems are in place. Good procedures are in place to assess the impact that major spending decisions, such as computers or additional teaching assistants' hours, may have on standards. Systems for monitoring spending are good and spending patterns are closely linked to the identified educational priorities in the school improvement plan. The school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing goods and services. The day-to-day administration, carried out by the school secretary, is very good and provides a very pleasant first point of contact for parents, pupils and visitors, as well as contributing much to the very smooth and efficient running of the school. Taking all factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	364 426	Balance from previous year	8 266
Total expenditure	364 404	Balance carried forward to the next	8 288
Expenditure per pupil	4 555		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

33. Children enter the school with a wide range of abilities that fluctuate from year to year, but overall attainment when children start at the school is below average. By the end of the reception year, the majority of the children have attained the nationally recommended early learning goals in all areas of learning, and attainment is at an expected level.
34. The children benefit from teaching that is consistently of a good standard in both the nursery and reception classes. Teaching assistants make an important and significant contribution to the quality of children's learning, and team work between all adults is a particular strength. Teachers and support staff provide a rich and varied range of learning experiences for the children. However, assessment information is not consistently used well enough to inform the planning of different activities so that they are always very well matched to the differing abilities of the children. Children with special needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in all activities. The classrooms are large, spacious and well resourced and colourful displays of the children's work enhance the learning environment. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed because teaching and learning are monitored well, curriculum provision is well matched to how young children learn best, adults are deployed well and strong partnerships are established with parents from the outset. All these factors contribute significantly to children's good achievement. The induction processes for new children are very good, and the curriculum provided is good. Children's behaviour is very good. This good provision has been maintained since the time of the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching promotes children's independence well.
- Relationships are strong and help children to quickly settle into school routines.
- Children are polite and very well behaved, and respond well to the high expectations that are set.

Commentary

35. Teaching, learning and achievement are good in this area of learning, and attainment is at an average level by the time that children are ready to start in Year 1. Teaching staff from the outset set high expectations as to how children are to behave, and children respond in a very positive manner and show high levels of politeness when talking to adults and to one another. The relationships that are established across the Foundation Stage are particularly strong, and this helps to fill the children with confidence and to quickly adapt to school routines. Children are expected to know how to become part of a social group, and this is done through well planned learning activities as well as snack time. By the end of the reception year, children readily share items, take turns, play together well and show satisfactory levels of perseverance when working on different tasks. Children move confidently around their classrooms, and the rest of the school when necessary, and they relate well to older pupils. Teachers and other practitioners provide children with lots of opportunities to take part in practical, first-hand and child-led activities, all of which do much to promote children's ability to become independent learners.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is effective in developing children's communication skills, particularly their speaking skills.
- Children enjoy handling books, and developing their early reading skills.
- Good resources help to motivate children.

Commentary

36. All children achieve well because of good teaching, and by the end of the reception year, most children reach the early learning goals. Early reading and writing skills are taught well. Teachers and staff often read stories in an animated fashion, and this captures children's attention and leads to an early enjoyment of reading. Good quality large storybooks are used well and are visually attractive to children. Children enjoy looking at books, and in reception, many children recognise a number of words that they read to others. Teachers provide children with good opportunities to write, and whilst those in nursery develop their emergent writing skills when writing in their 'house', those in reception write their names and other simple words, such as labels and lists, to display at their 'airport'. Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well because all staff consistently capitalise on the opportunities to engage children in conversation and discussion, cajoling them to answer in sentences. A good number of children speak clearly and often at length, although some others speak only in single words or short phrases, not possessing the vocabulary or the confidence to make longer contributions, despite the very supportive prompts of staff.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching places a good emphasis on children learning through practical and first-hand learning experiences.
- Children learn well through the provision of number games, number rhymes and shape activities.

Commentary

37. The good quality of teaching and learning enables all children to achieve well by the end of the reception year, and many have attained the expected goals in this area of learning. Teaching staff strike a good balance between the direct teaching of early mathematical skills and providing the chance for children to learn through fun practical, investigative tasks. Teachers provide many good quality opportunities for children to learn to count through many different counting rhymes. In the nursery, children count different snack items before they eat them. Children also attempt to identify the correct number of items to match a numeral. Children in reception successfully add 'one more', and some find 'one less', with some children able to add two numbers. Teachers provide children with a good variety of mathematical tasks and games that help them to develop their knowledge of shape and measures as they play with sand and water, as well as carrying out more formal and structured tasks. Through all these activities, many children, by the end of the reception year, develop a satisfactory mathematical vocabulary that allows them to talk about various concepts such as 'big' and 'small' and 'long' and 'short', as well as to name basic two-dimensional shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide and varied range of learning activities enables children to learn much about the world in which they live.
- Children thoroughly enjoy the practical activities that are on offer, and are very keen to talk about their work.

Commentary

38. The good teaching and learning enable all children to achieve well, and by the end of the reception year, most children have attained the expected goals in this area of learning. Staff provide children with a varied and fun range of learning activities and experiences that enable them to learn a great deal about themselves and the world around them. Children in the nursery learn, for example, about the parts of the body, whilst those in reception are taught about the senses. Similarly, the children are taught well about different places, and while those in nursery learn about the local area, those in reception have developed a satisfactory knowledge about the wider world through following the journey of a letter. Children in both classes are developing a good awareness of different cultures through activities such as learning about the Chinese New Year, and are given opportunities to learn some early knowledge about

Christianity and other world faiths. Teachers provide the children with a wide variety of learning experiences, such as going on walks in the community and visiting local places of interest. Children are keen and eager to talk about these trips and about all the things they do when finding about the wider world. Children are developing satisfactory computer skills, with staff often using a good range of programs that extend children's literacy and numeracy skills. Practical activities, such as preparing food, are a regular feature in both nursery and reception classes. Be it exploring materials, looking at objects in the natural world or making vegetable soup or milk shakes, children love the hands-on experiences and explain what they are doing with high levels of enthusiasm.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of learning activities enhances children's physical development well.
- Key physical skills are taught in a direct and effective manner.
- Good use is made of the outdoor play provision.

Commentary

39. Teaching, learning and achievement are all good, and by the end of the reception year, children's physical skills are at an expected level. Children benefit from a good quality and varied range of activities that are provided daily and which help to ensure that their gross and fine motor skills are developed well. Staff ensure that pencils, crayons, scissors, play dough and a variety of construction toys are readily available, and children use them with enthusiasm. The manner in which staff directly teach children how to use tools leads to immediate improvements in children's usage. In the nursery, children successfully use play dough to produce various shapes, such as small animals, and in reception they successfully cut and stick shapes and thread beads onto a string. The outdoor facilities available for both classes are used well, such as for climbing and using wheeled vehicles. Staff also make good use of the variety of equipment in the hall to allow the children to climb, jump and to develop satisfactory throwing and catching skills. Staff support children well, providing clear demonstrations and much encouragement, which helps to improve children's physical agility, whilst at the same time developing children's awareness of the need to be safe in their actions.

Creative development

The provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching provided by all adults stimulates children's imagination.
- Children are presented with a wide variety of activities in music, painting, model-making and using their imagination, to which they respond well.
- Children are particularly keen to tackle role-play activities.

Commentary

40. The good teaching and learning ensures that children achieve well, and by the end of the reception year, most children attain the early learning goals. In both nursery and reception classes, a wide range of activities is provided, which the children undertake with enthusiasm. Children play instruments, sing songs and produce paintings and models on a regular basis. They show satisfactory skills in all activities. Teaching encourages children to be imaginative and creative in their efforts, and children often rise well to this challenge. Children are especially happy to take part in role-play activities. In both the 'house' and on the 'bus' in the nursery, and at the 'airport' in reception, children show good levels of imagination, and it is also a golden opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers and teaching assistants complement each other very well in supporting, encouraging and stimulating the children. For example, teaching assistants in nursery were regularly seen travelling on the 'bus', to places as far away as the moon, helping the driver by taking the fares!

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good emphasis that the school has placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills has led to good improvements in this aspect of pupils' learning.
- Reading and writing skills are taught well and contribute much to how well pupils achieve.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well in different subjects.
- Assessment information and the marking of pupils' work are not being used well enough to have the biggest possible impact on how well pupils' learn.
- Leadership and management of the subject have contributed much to improving provision.

Commentary

41. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing. When compared to similar schools, attainment was above average in reading and average in writing. Inspection findings show that attainment is at an average level in reading, writing, speaking and listening by the end of Year 2. Standards are above average by the end of Year 3. Differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the fact that different groups of pupils start school with varying levels of communication skills. The important factor is that pupils of all abilities, and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well, and there is no differences in achievement between boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

42. The school has placed a great emphasis on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills, and teachers' efforts have been a success. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen attentively and are always ready to take part in question and answer sessions. They are confident speakers and listeners and show good respect when listening to others, although the vocabulary that pupils use lacks a little expressiveness. Pupils are equipped with a good range of strategies to help them tackle new words and phrases, and this builds up their reading skills. Many pupils read with accuracy and fluency and can locate information satisfactorily. Fewer pupils read with a real sense of expression. Pupils write in a satisfactory manner and are aware of the importance of using capital letters and full stops, with the higher-attaining students using other punctuation to enliven their writing. Pupils continue to acquire literacy skills at a good rate during their time in Year 3. By the time that pupils leave school, they read well. They comprehend well text that they have read, recognise the importance of reading with expression and use their skills well in other subjects when locating facts and information. Pupils write well technically for a range of different audiences and purposes, although the vocabulary they use lacks a little sparkle. Pupils are beginning to write extended pieces of work well, which keep the attention of the reader after a good opening. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good because of the focus on improving this aspect of pupils' learning, and pupils listen very well to teachers and to classmates, take it in turns to contribute to discussions and have learnt well how to justify their views and opinions.
43. Teaching and learning are good overall, and at times very good. Across the school, teachers capitalise well on the many opportunities that arise in literacy and other lessons to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. All the time, staff encourage pupils to listen well and to evaluate what has been said before framing a response. Pupils know what is expected of them and many are keen and eager to discuss and debate a wide range of issues or simply to answer questions in complete sentences. A particular strength is the manner in which writing skills are taught in a direct manner. Pupils are taught the skills of how to write for a wide variety of audiences and purposes, with less able pupils given writing frames and scaffolds to help them shape their writing. Teaching in this aspect of the subject is particularly good in the Year 2/3 class. The teaching of phonics is given a good emphasis, and this helps pupils to develop good early reading skills. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of interesting fiction and non-fiction texts, and this leads the pupils to want to find out more about a particular subject or author. Across the school, work that is set takes good account of the differing abilities of pupils, and as a result, work is suitably challenging and demanding and engages the attention of the pupils. Teaching assistants play a pivotal role in how well pupils achieve. They encourage and cajole pupils to take a full and active role in all aspects of the lesson and their support, whilst sensitive to the needs of the individual, still sets high expectations in terms of application and the quality of work that is introduced. Pupils' work is marked on a regular basis, but the opportunity is not consistently used to identify exactly what a pupil needs to do to improve or why a piece of work is good. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and for analysing test and assessment data. However, the information is not used as well as it could be for setting individual targets for pupils, for tracking pupils' progress towards these targets or for more actively informing and involving pupils in the process. Plans are already in hand to address these issues.

44. The subject is well led and managed, and this has contributed to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement over time. The subject leader and headteacher have monitored teaching and learning rigorously in many lessons. Formal feedback, which clearly identifies strengths and any areas for improvement, is always given to staff. Teachers' planning and pupils' work is scrutinised on a regular basis. All these factors mean that the subject leader has a good grasp of the areas that need to be tackled to improve standards still further.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. The use of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum is good. Teachers capitalise well on opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Very good emphasis is given to how well pupils' speaking and listening skills can be enhanced across the curriculum. A strength is the fact that when teachers are planning for all subjects, they identify opportunities and then plan good quality tasks that will actively promote pupils' literacy skills in a relevant, meaningful and interesting manner.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching provides pupils with good opportunities to apply and use their mathematical skills, but at times there could be more challenge for the higher-attaining students.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to pupils' learning.
- Good subject leadership is impacting on the quality of learning in the classroom.
- There are good links between mathematics and other subjects across the curriculum.
- The use of assessment is not yet sufficiently developed to have the biggest possible impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

46. On the basis of the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils in 2004, attainment was in line with the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards are currently at an average level by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 3. Evidence clearly indicates that in Years 1-3, pupils of all abilities and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
47. By the end of Year 2, pupils have acquired a satisfactory range of strategies to handle numbers mentally and to verbalise the methods they use, but are less confident in solving written word problems. Pupils count on or count back to work out single and two-digit subtraction, and use number fans, number squares and other practical

apparatus well to reinforce their understanding. Pupils' ability to handle data and measure accurately is satisfactory. Pupils continue to develop their skills and knowledge at a good rate in Year 3, and by the time that pupils leave school, many are confident mathematicians. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and have good mental agility skills. Pupils are adept at putting their numeracy skills to the test in problem-solving and investigative activities. Pupils understand simple fractions well and select appropriate measuring instruments, estimate distances and measure accurately, comparing their results to estimations. They use correct mathematical vocabulary and can name a range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.

48. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain new concepts well. Teachers create a good learning climate where pupils feel confident to ask and answer questions. Mental agility sessions at the start of lessons involve pupils actively in their learning and teachers use good questioning to challenge and extend thinking. Group work is well planned to cater for a wide range of abilities and ages within classes. A particular strength is the wide range of opportunities that are provided for pupils to use and apply what they know, and pupils thoroughly enjoy tasks of a practical nature. On occasions, however, mathematical investigations do not always challenge the higher-attaining pupils. Overall, the range and challenge of learning activities motivate the pupils and keep them enthusiastic and interested. Teaching assistants and adult helpers support pupils' learning very well and enable pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English to be actively involved in all aspects of lessons. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and for analysing test data. The weaker aspect of assessment is that the information is not used rigorously enough to inform the target-setting process or for pupils to be more actively involved in setting and reviewing their own targets. In addition, although pupils' work is marked regularly, the opportunity is not consistently used to outline what pupils need to do to improve.
49. Subject leadership and management are good. The subject leader takes an active role in planning the development of the subject. She has identified the key areas for improvement, which include continuing to develop problem-solving activities and to implement more rigorous assessment and tracking. Both the headteacher and subject leader monitor the subject well, sampling work, examining planning and carrying out lesson observations. Formal feedback is always given to teachers. All these factors, together with good quality training organised by the subject leader, have led to good improvements over time in standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is good. In a Year 2 physical education lesson, the teacher took the opportunity to discuss with pupils symmetrical shapes they could make in their gymnastic movements. In science, pupils have measured distances when vehicles were propelled by an elastic band. They have discussed the importance of mathematical shapes in building shelters. Pupils have used ICT programs to solve problems and have drawn computer-generated graphs and have used screen turtles to draw mathematical shapes.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.
- Teaching makes good use of practical and investigative activities to enhance pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not make consistently good use of assessment information to improve learning.
- Teaching assistants add much to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils show good attitudes towards the subject and they particularly enjoy the practical work.
- The subject leader has contributed well to the improvements that have been made.

Commentary

51. On the basis of the 2004 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was in line with the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 3. Pupils of all abilities and pupils whose mother tongue is not English, all achieve well. There is no significant evidence to indicate that there are differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because the standards and the quality of teaching have both improved.
52. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the main parts of the human body and a flowering plant, and most identify what is needed to sustain life. Pupils recognise and name common materials, and most successfully describe their various uses in a satisfactory manner. They understand that pushes and pulls are examples of forces, and most have a secure awareness that light comes from a variety of sources. Most pupils describe in a competent way how to produce an electric circuit and their investigative skills are at an expected level. Pupils continue to acquire scientific knowledge and skills at a good rate, and many pupils leave school as good young scientists. Pupils carry out a good range of experiments well and have developed a good understanding of fair testing and an awareness of the need to make accurate predictions. Pupils record findings in a variety of ways, including text, tables and graphs. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the life processes of humans and the importance of a healthy diet. Pupils show a good understanding of aspects of materials, especially identifying those that are most waterproof. Pupils understand the idea of forces, and they explain well how an item can be made to travel increasing distances using appropriate equipment.
53. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned, with teachers throughout the school now making good provision for practical activities, which are often challenging and interesting. Teachers have high expectations as to how pupils are to use their scientific knowledge to help them make well informed predictions. This is an improvement since the previous

inspection. Pupils really enjoy this aspect of their work, and many work hard and readily rise to the challenges that are set. The teachers are particularly careful to use and emphasise the correct scientific terminology, which has a beneficial effect on the pupils' overall learning. The teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to explain new concepts and to provide clear instructions and helpful demonstrations of the work that is to be undertaken. Teachers support all pupils in turn, and this helps them all, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to make good progress. Teachers are well supported by the teaching assistants, especially when practical work is being tackled, and this impacts positively on the quality of learning. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and for analysing test data. However, information from assessments is not always used well enough to match work to the individual needs of pupils. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but few add comments of support and advice to help the pupils understand how to develop their work further or involve pupils enough in setting their own targets.

54. The subject leader is keen and enthusiastic as well as being a good practitioner, and her leadership and management skills are good. She has contributed much towards the improvement in standards, especially in relation to the emphasis on practical work. She has had some good opportunities to observe work in other classes and scrutinises teachers' planning and pupils' work well. She is well aware of the standards being achieved in the school and provides colleagues with help and advice when needed. She is also aware that, to improve standards even further, teachers need to ensure that they provide pupils with work that suits their differing needs, and that they involve pupils more in target-setting.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards, staff subject knowledge and resources have improved well since the time of the last inspection.
- The computer suite is being used well for the direct teaching of key skills.
- Pupils show high levels of interest and motivation when using computers.
- The good practice of putting pupils' computer skills to effective use in other subjects is not consistent enough.
- Good leadership and management are impacting positively on standards and provision.
- Assessment procedures are not yet fully embedded to have the best possible impact on the quality of pupils' learning.

Commentary

55. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 3 are at an average level and improving at a good rate. Achievement is satisfactory and at times good within individual lessons. Improvement has been good since the time of the last

inspection when standards and the time allocated to the teaching of information and communication technology were judged to be unsatisfactory.

56. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to log on, print, save and retrieve work. They have satisfactory keyboard skills and mouse control and recognise technical language such as “icons” and “drag”. Pupils know how to change the size and colour of the font they are using. Pupils are beginning to merge pictures and text in a satisfactory manner and they are successful at writing simple instructions for programmable toys to follow. By the end of Year 3, pupils use their word-processing skills in a satisfactory manner to write stories, although this sometimes takes quite a while. Pupils are becoming more confident at using computers to find information and are beginning to gain an early awareness of the potential of E-mail. Pupils are able to write simple instructions for a screen turtle.
57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good aspects. The school has recently had a computer suite installed. Teachers use the suite well to directly teach to groups of pupils key skills which they will need to fulfil tasks that are set. Pupils are taught how to use an art program to produce Aboriginal pictures. They respond well to the challenge, and some of the finished products are of a good standard. Pupils are taught well how to locate information using different websites and then given challenging tasks to put these skills to the test. The school has invested well in providing good quality training for staff, and this has resulted in staff improving their subject expertise and being able to deal more quickly with any glitches that occur without any lesson time being lost. Discussions with pupils indicate that they thoroughly enjoy using computers and they demonstrate high levels of interest, concentration and perseverance when doing so but are always ready to help out a classmate who may be struggling a little. Pupils also state that they have had far more access to computers since the installation of the computer suite.
58. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has played an important role in improving standards and resources. She has a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and monitors planning well. Plans are in hand for teaching and learning to be directly monitored in the near future, although she provides much valued informal help and guidance to colleagues. The school is currently trialling a Local Education Authority assessment package in the subject, which, if successful, will be adopted to monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory, but is an identified area in the school improvement plan. Teachers are increasingly identifying opportunities at the subject planning stage as to where computers could be used in a relevant and meaningful way to support and enhance pupils' learning. Although some good examples were observed during the inspection, there remain some missed opportunities to really challenge pupils' thinking and learning through the use of well chosen programs and tasks that extend rather than consolidate pupils' learning.

HUMANITIES

60. Due to timetable constraints, no lessons were observed in history and geography in the week of inspection, and these subjects were sampled. Consequently, it was not possible to make a judgement on provision in either subject. Religious education is reported on in full.
61. A study of teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work in **geography**, together with discussions with pupils and teachers, indicate that standards are at least at an average level at the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Evidence also indicates that all aspects of the subject are covered in depth over the course of the year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have studied different types of houses and buildings in the area, and they have produced detailed maps of their journeys to school and to the local park. Pupils have extended their knowledge of places through following the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear', especially enjoying his visit to Hong Kong. Pupils in Year 3 have studied aspects of world geography, especially relating to climate, food production and poverty. In particular, they are well informed about Australia, and they successfully compare aspects of life in Australia with those at home. Pupils in the school show considerable concern for the environment and the impact of pollution, and they readily identify ways in which the environment could be protected and improved. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner and the subject leader is working hard to develop the subject further and is currently looking at ways to introduce more formal and rigorous assessment procedures.
62. In **history**, a study of planning, work previously completed and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards are at an expected level by the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 talk in detail about the idea of 'old' and 'new' and, in sequencing household items, show a developing sense of chronology. Pupils also know a satisfactory level of knowledge about Guy Fawkes and the part he played in the Gunpowder Plot. Pupils in Year 3 show a secure understanding of aspects of British history, such as the Viking invasion. They know that the Vikings came from Scandinavia. Pupils have a good awareness of the life led by children during the Second World War, which was heightened by the role-play activities they had undertaken, when they dressed as children awaiting evacuation. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of local history. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner, as the subject leader has a secure awareness of provision in the subject and she has recently introduced effective assessment procedures, which, if proved successful, are to be the model to be used in other subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of the varied and interesting learning activities on offer.
- The subject is used very well to raise pupils' awareness of different faiths and cultures.
- The subject is used well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching assistants add significantly to the learning ethos of lessons.
- The subject leader has contributed much to improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

- Assessment procedures are not yet good enough.

Commentary

63. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Year 3, standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Across the school, pupils of all abilities and pupils whose first language is not English, achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
64. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and have a satisfactory recall of stories from the Bible. They know festivals such as Easter and recognise that "light" has significance for different religions. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness that different religions have different places of worship, although they cannot always recall them. Already the pupils are showing good levels of respect and understanding for different faiths and cultures. In both lessons and assemblies, pupils sit perfectly still and calm in moments of thinking and reflection. Pupils build on this good start in Year 3, and by the time that pupils leave the school, they have a good understanding and awareness of Christian and other world faiths. Pupils talk knowledgeably about Advent, the different days of Easter and Palm Sunday. Pupils re-tell stories from the Bible well. Their knowledge of world faiths has increased and pupils have a good knowledge of places of worship, such as mosques and temples and know which foods are eaten at festivals such as Pesach, Divali and Id-ul-Fitr and have made barfi, a food eaten during Divali. The pupils show high levels of respect when talking about the beliefs of others and continue to be contemplative and reflective in lessons and assemblies.
65. Teaching and learning are good across the school. Teaching deepens pupils' understanding because different faiths are covered comprehensively, and this in turn contributes significantly to pupils' cultural awareness. Lessons are well planned and the use made of religious artefacts, visitors and visits to places of worship helps to bring learning to life and to keep pupils motivated and interested. In a good lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher brought in a statue of Buddha and talked eloquently about how Buddhists give much time to contemplation and then gave pupils the chance to sit quietly with their thoughts. There was silence. Across the school, the subject is used well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, with pupils showing high levels of interest and attentiveness when teachers introduce different faiths in an animated and lively manner. High expectations are set as to how pupils should value and respect the contributions of classmates, and invariably they respond well. Teaching assistants play a very proactive role in teaching and learning and help to ensure that pupils with special needs and pupils whose first language is not English, take a full and inclusive part in the varied and interesting learning activities.
66. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader monitors planning on a regular basis, has a good grasp of standards and provision in the subject and is currently seeking to introduce more formal assessment procedures. She has carried out some limited lesson observations and has scrutinised pupils' work. When the subject is an identified priority on the school improvement plan, time will be allocated for the direct observation of teaching and learning. The subject leader has played an important role in improving provision in the subject by raising the contribution that the subject makes to the development of pupils' multicultural awareness and of learning through first-hand experiences.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. Due to timetable constraints, only one lesson was seen in art and design and no lessons were seen in design and technology. More lessons were seen in music and physical education and these subjects are reported in full.
68. In **art and design**, on the basis of the scrutiny of available pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils, evidence indicates that standards are at least at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 3. In Year 1, pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with colour-mixing, drawing and painting with a range of different media. From the outset, pupils are encouraged to be imaginative and creative in their work and to put their stamp of originality on all that they do. As pupils move through Years 2 and Year 3, they continue to be provided with lots of good quality opportunities to work in both two- and three-dimensions. Pupils carry out observational drawings of fruit, flowers and trees in their work on art in nature. They work with fabrics and clay and are taught how to weave. Key skills such as shading, how to use watercolours, and how using different paintbrushes can produce different effects are all taught well. Pupils are given the chance to use crayons, oil pastels and other media when working in the style of different famous artists, with pupils showing a good awareness of the work of artists such as Van Gogh and Andy Goldsworthy. Art is used well as a vehicle for developing pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils have looked at Aboriginal art and produced good quality two- and three-dimensional work in this style and have also used computers to design and make "Aboriginal pictures". Pupils have studied Asian art and made banners and scrolls linked to the Chinese New Year. Discussions with pupils indicate that they thoroughly enjoy taking part in art lessons. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with the subject leader demonstrating good levels of knowledge and enthusiasm aimed at developing the subject further. She has good awareness of the quality of provision in the subject through scrutiny of work and planning, but opportunities for the direct monitoring of teaching and learning have been limited. She is currently seeking to develop a more rigorous approach to assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress, as at present, this is not at a satisfactory level.
69. In **design and technology**, evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Planning indicates that pupils are provided with opportunities to work with a range of different materials and to experiment in joining and fixing different materials and fabrics together. During their time in the school, pupils are given the chance to work with a range of different construction kits where they build to a specific design brief. Pupils have made models out of recyclable materials and produced toys and models with moving parts. A good emphasis is given to food technology as pupils make different flavoured breads and made food for a healthy lunchbox. There are good links made with science when pupils not only have to design shelters for different purposes but also have to carefully examine what they consider would be the most suitable materials. Planning indicates that a good emphasis is given to the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject, although discussions with pupils show they particularly enjoy the making aspect. Planning also shows that teaching flags up the importance of the direct teaching of key skills, such as cutting, joining and fixing techniques as well as encouraging pupils to be imaginative and inventive in their finished products. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and have contributed much to the development of the subject over time. The subject leader monitors planning but has had few opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. The school has identified the need to introduce procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress in the subject because at present these are not at a satisfactory level.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is used well to motivate pupils and to help them achieve well.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to take part in all aspects of the subject.
- A good range of quality extracurricular activities brings another dimension to how well pupils learn.
- The subject is used very well to help raise pupils' cultural awareness.
- Teaching assistants enhance the quality of pupils' learning.
- Procedures for assessing and tracking how well pupils are doing are not good enough.

Commentary

70. Standards in music are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Across the school, pupils of all abilities and pupils whose first language is not English achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
71. By the end of Year 2, pupils already have a good knowledge of the names of different instruments. They have developed a good early awareness of simple musical notation and can follow this notation when clapping out rhythms. Pupils sing well and quickly pick up and then remember newly learnt songs. Pupils recognise well that music can evoke different feelings and responses. By the time that pupils leave school at the end of Year 3, many have good musical skills and knowledge for their age. Pupils use a range of different instruments well to produce a rhythm and use instruments well to produce different sound effects. Pupils have well-developed compositional skills and are creative in the pieces of music that they compose. Pupils continue to sing well and know about the importance of circular breathing when playing the didgeridoo. They know about a wide range of musical instruments and the different families of instruments in an orchestra.
72. Teaching and learning are good across the school. Planning indicates that over the course of the year, pupils are given every chance to perform, to compose and to listen to different and varied pieces of music. Some teachers have very good subject knowledge and this is used to great effect in capturing and then sustaining the interest of pupils. Teaching assistants play their part in supporting and cajoling pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, and in doing so, enable the pupils to be fully included in all aspects of the music curriculum. The pupils are introduced to a wide range of different instruments from around the world and this often captivates them and raises their interest levels. Pupils are directly taught techniques to help them to sing better, how to improve their compositional skills and how to get more varied sounds from instruments. All these factors lead to an immediate improvement in the level of pupils' performance. Teaching introduces pupils to Aboriginal music, to the sound of African drums, to jazz and blues music and to music from many other parts of the world. The school runs a wide range of extracurricular music activities and gives the pupils many opportunities to take part in public performances and concerts in school and in the community. The good quality musical provision that is on offer in the school not only develops pupils' musical skills well, but it also contributes much to pupils' cultural and personal development.

73. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner. The subject leader has played an important role in developing the profile of the subject in school and monitors planning well. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been limited over time, but it is planned to take place in the summer of 2005 when the subject is an identified area on the school improvement plan. Assessment is also an identified area for improvement because at the present time it is unsatisfactory, as no formal procedures are in place to assess or track pupils' progress.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in gymnastics is good overall and at times very good.
- Teaching assistants ensure that all pupils are fully included in activities.
- On occasions, pupils are not always focused enough on their learning.
- Procedures to assess and track pupils' progress are not in place.

Commentary

74. Standards by the end of Year 2 in gymnastics are at an average level and pupils achieve satisfactorily. By the time that pupils leave school at the end of Year 3, standards overall are at a satisfactory level, and in gymnastics they are above average. Pupils achieve well in this aspect of the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
75. By the end of Year 2, pupils follow instructions and explore different ways to travel with the body stretched in low and high positions. They carry out these skills in a satisfactory manner. They begin to put together sequences of movements and show a secure awareness of how to improve the quality of their own performances. By the end of Year 3, pupils have the confidence to create more adventurous movements and sequences as they move from low to high positions on floor and apparatus with ease and confidence. They use apparatus confidently and link movements imaginatively. They assess the quality of each others' performances and share ideas well.
76. Teaching and learning overall are good in gymnastics with some very good practice. Pupils enjoy their lessons, generally listen carefully to instructions and learn to co-operate well with one another. Where teaching is at its best, teachers provide activities that engage the pupils and challenge them to improve their performance. Teachers involve pupils in demonstrating what they can do and ask the pupils to reflect and comment on the quality of performance. Pupils are encouraged to be imaginative and adventurous in putting together sequences. Lessons have good pace, and time is used effectively as pupils move quickly between activities. Where lessons are just satisfactory, pupils are too noisy during the activities and are not sufficiently focused on the quality of their performance. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to lessons, ensuring pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English are fully included. They are skilled in encouraging pupils to take part. They model movements alongside the pupils and offer guidance. They work closely with the teacher and take notes on progress to share with the teacher afterwards.

77. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A good quality action plan is in place and the subject leader is focusing on the subject in the management course which she is currently attending. The subject leader successfully monitors planning to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered well over the course of the year and provides much informal guidance to colleagues. There have been limited opportunities for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning, but plans are in hand for her to do so when the subject is a school area for improvement. Although teachers informally assess pupils' progress and new assessment procedures are being tested out, no formal procedures are in place, and at present, assessment is unsatisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

78. The provision made for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good and contributes significantly to pupils' personal development. The school promotes healthy eating and lifestyles through the science and physical education curriculum, and the school's commitment to raising pupils' awareness of health issues is reflected in the Healthy Schools Award they gained in 2003. The school has timetabled philosophy lessons where pupils discuss a wide range of social, personal, national and international issues. In these sessions, pupils are encouraged to express their views and opinions in the full knowledge that these views will be listened to and respected. Pupils are given good opportunities to carry out tasks and responsibilities around the school and carry these out with high levels of maturity. Teaching places a high priority on pupils taking responsibility for their own actions, and pupils respond very well to these expectations. The school is also very successful through philosophy lessons, through PSHE lessons and through many other subjects of the curriculum at raising pupils' awareness of different faiths, cultures and beliefs and reinforcing the notion that every child is a citizen of the world. Discussions with pupils show that they feel that their voices are listened to and are proud of the adventure playground and garden they have helped to develop. The school and pupils recognise that the proposed school council will further extend the opportunity for all pupils to have a strong voice in the school.

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	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).