

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Corton Church of England Voluntary Controlled  
Primary School**

Lowestoft

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124727

Headteacher: Mrs V Cunnane

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven  
3961

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> July 2000

Inspection number: 198893

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Street Corton Lowestoft Suffolk
Postcode:	NR32 5HW
Telephone number:	01502 730596
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr V Bowler
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Michael Raven	Registered Inspector	Under fives	The school's results and achievements
		Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
		Mathematics	How well is the school led and managed?
		Science	
		History	
		Physical education	
		Religious education	
Mr R Ibbitson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr P Cosway	Team inspector	Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		English	
		Information technology	
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		Music	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Corton School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school for boys and girls aged from four to nine years. There are 70 pupils on roll, which means that it is considerably smaller than most primary schools nationally. All the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Twenty-one percent of pupils have special educational needs, which is about average, but there are none with a statement of special educational needs, which is unusual. Children enter the school at the age of four with attainment, which varies, but is broadly average in all the six areas of learning for children under five.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The effectiveness of the school is good. There has been substantial improvement in standards and leadership and management since the last inspection. Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the age of seven. They are also above average in English by the age of nine. The quality of teaching is good overall, with much that is very good. The leadership and management of the school is very good. The school offers good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Leadership and management is very good.
- Teaching is good.
- Standards in English and mathematics are above average by the age of seven. They also exceed expectations in art, music and design and technology.
- The school promotes pupils' social and moral development very well.
- The school cares for its pupils very well.
- There is a very effective partnership with parents.

#### **What could be improved**

- The balance of time allocated to subjects within the curriculum, particularly science.
- The development of pupils' writing skills throughout the school.
- The clarity of the information provided by the governors for parents, concerning provision for the disabled and pupils' attendance rates.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school's last full inspection took place in December 1997. Progress on its post-inspection action plan was also inspected in July 1999. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Leadership and management has improved substantially and it is now very good. The quality of teaching has improved very well. Standards have improved significantly. The teaching and provision for children under five have improved significantly, so that these children now achieve very well.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
reading	A	A	B	C
writing	D	B	B	D
mathematics	A	A*	A	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Compared to all primary schools nationally, standards in the 1999 national tests and assessments for seven year-olds were above average in reading and writing, and in mathematics they were well above average. Provisional results of the 2000 tests and assessments suggest that reading and mathematics remain above average and that writing is about average. Compared to similar schools, standards in 1999 were average in reading, above average in mathematics and below average in writing. Comparisons with similar schools may be misleading. Similar schools are taken to be those nationally, which have similar proportions of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The school feels that there are many families who are eligible for free school meals, but do not apply. This is common in small schools in village communities. Small and fluctuating cohorts make it difficult to detect reliably trends in standards over time. For example, one pupil represents almost eight per cent of the current group of Year 2 pupils. Inspection evidence shows that standards in speaking and listening and in reading are above average at the age of seven. Writing is weaker, with standards about average. Standards in mathematics are above average. In science, standards are better than they were in the 1999 teacher assessments, when they were below average. They are now in line with national averages. These findings from the inspection are broadly consistent with the 2000 provisional test and assessment results. The inspection shows that by the time pupils transfer to middle school at the age of nine, standards in English are above average, although writing is weaker. Standards in mathematics and science are average. Standards exceed national expectations in art, design and technology and music by the ages of seven and nine, and in the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, standards meet expectations. Considering their overall average attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve well to reach standards, which are often above average by the ages of seven and nine.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The attitudes of most pupils are very positive. They are very enthusiastic about school. A small number of boys at the top of the school have less satisfactory attitudes.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. No pupils have been excluded from school. A few boys new to the school in Key Stage 2 behave less well than the majority.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Most pupils understand the impact of their actions on others and show good levels of respect for others' feelings.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils attend regularly and arrive on time.

Most pupils are very enthusiastic about school. They behave well in lessons and around the school, for instance at lunch-time and in the playground. They get on very well together and even the youngest children share and cooperate well in their work and play. The attitudes and behaviour of a small number of boys at the top of the school are unsatisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall: 26	Very good	good	good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teaching is good. It has improved substantially since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. In about seven lessons in every ten teaching is good or better. In about three lessons in ten it is very good. In about three lessons in ten teaching is satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching for the children under five is very good and the teaching of these children is enhanced well by skilled support staff. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Teachers are skilled in teaching literacy and numeracy, and develop pupils' reading and number skills well, although skills in writing are less well developed. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and this enables them to explain things clearly and so promote good learning. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in the basic subjects is good, and teachers use this information well to help plan their teaching. Pupils are very well managed in reception and Key Stage 1. The management and control of pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, although a small number of boys behave poorly. The learning needs of all pupils are successfully met, including those who find learning more difficult. The children under five learn very well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The balance of time allocated to subjects, particularly English and mathematics on the one hand, and science on the other, needs to be systematically reviewed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are well supported in lessons and helped to have full access to the school's curriculum, and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school promotes pupils' moral and social development very well. Spiritual and cultural development are fostered well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. There are very effective procedures to ensure child protection and pupils' welfare. Good behaviour is promoted successfully and most pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.

The school has a very effective partnership with parents. They are well involved in the life and work of the school and kept well informed. The curriculum is broad and it is enriched well by a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, the balance of time between subjects is inappropriate, with too small a proportion of time being given to science and some other subjects. The school cares for its pupils very well. Their academic performance and personal development are monitored carefully. The school takes good care to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher gives very strong leadership, closely focused on school improvement. The staff share responsibility for managing subjects well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors are well informed about and involved in key management issues, such as the school improvement plan and the budget. They set targets for raising standards and monitor progress effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Teaching and learning are appropriately monitored by the headteacher and local education authority. There is extensive analysis and evaluation of pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school, starting with an assessment of their capabilities on entry. The governors use assessment information well to set targets for improvement in standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is carefully drafted in light of school improvement targets and priorities. Funds are used well to support pupils' learning, including those who have special educational needs.

The leadership and management offered by the headteacher is very good. It has improved substantially since the last inspection. It is closely focused on school improvement. Information gathered through lesson observations and test and assessment results is carefully evaluated and used to set appropriate targets for improvement. Governors are well involved in the target setting process. There is an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers to support pupils' learning and teach the full curriculum. Good support is given by ancillary staff and this enhances learning, especially for the children under five. The building is not fully adequate to the needs of pupils. A large number of the oldest pupils are crowded into a mobile classroom, without water or toilets. The accommodation is inadequate for the teaching of the full physical education curriculum, and pupils have to travel on a bus to another school for some lessons. Learning resources are adequate. The school takes care to obtain the best possible value for money in securing goods and services.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of work children get to do at home</li> <li>• Information about how children are getting on</li> </ul>

The inspection supports parents' positive comments about the school. The amount of work pupils get to do at home is satisfactory. Parents are given good information about how their children are getting on.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

1. There were serious weaknesses in standards mainly at Key Stage 2 at the time of the last inspection. These have been successfully addressed and standards are now at least in line with national averages and expectations at both key stages.
2. In the 1999 national tests and assessments for seven year olds standards in reading were above average compared to all schools nationally. Standards in writing were also above average. Standards in mathematics were well above average. When compared with similar schools standards in reading were average. They were below average in writing and above average in mathematics. Similar schools are taken to be those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school considers that this comparison is misleading, as many families who may be eligible do not apply for free meals. This is common in small schools in village communities. Given the overall average socio-economic circumstances of the families represented at the school, the inspection team accepts that the 'similar' schools comparison is likely to be misleading. Comparisons between standards achieved in different years have to be treated with caution, because there are often small numbers of pupils involved. There are only eight pupils in Year 2 at present, for example, making comparisons of standards in the 1999 tests and assessments with those found in the present Year 2 of limited validity. One pupil in the present group represents almost eight per cent of the cohort. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading are currently above average by the time pupils are aged seven. Standards in speaking and listening are also above average. Standards in writing are currently in line with the national average. The school needs to do more to develop pupils' writing skills, to raise standards in this aspect of English. In mathematics standards are better than the national average and in science they are in line with the national average. Standards in reading and writing, in speaking and listening and in mathematics have all improved since the last inspection. In science they have remained average. This is partly because the school devotes too little time to science teaching, at both key stages. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations by the age of seven. They are in line with the expectations of the local education authority's syllabus for religious education. Standards in art and design and technology have improved well since the last inspection and they now exceed national expectations. In music, high standards have been maintained. Standards in history and geography meet national expectations. No judgement can be made about standards overall in physical education, as only swimming was available for inspection. Even the youngest children achieve well in swimming and they are on course to exceed national expectations by the age of 11.
3. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, standards in reading exceed national expectations. They also exceed expectations in speaking and listening. In writing, mathematics and science, standards are in line with national expectations. In all these subjects standards are better than they were at the time of the last inspection. Standards in information technology have improved. They now meet national expectations. Standards in religious education have been maintained and they meet the expectations of the local education authority's syllabus. Good improvements have been made in art and design and technology and standards now exceed national expectations by the age of nine. Good standards have been maintained in music. Standards in geography and history remain in line with national expectations. In physical education no judgements can be made, except in swimming. In this, pupils' achievements well exceed the expectation that they will be able to swim 25 metres by the age of 11. Many pupils are able to do this by the age of eight or nine.
4. Children enter the school aged four with attainment which is broadly average in all the six areas of learning for children under five: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. They are

very well taught and so they achieve well. This means that they make good progress in their learning, so that they are likely to do better than expected in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. This shows significant added value in relation to pupils' achievements on entry and this is confirmed by the overall above average standards by the age of seven.

5. The school is developing good skills in setting targets for raising standards. The results of national and other tests, for example, those taken in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4, are carefully analysed and evaluated. The information gathered is used well to set targets for improvement. The governors are very well involved in this process, through a designated 'target-setting' governor. The local education authority gives good help and support for this process. Satisfactory progress is being made towards meeting these targets.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards individual targets set for them in their education plans. This is because work is well matched to their needs and they are given good support by teachers and assistants, in lessons and in groups withdrawn from class, and helped to have access to the full curriculum along with their peers. The school's national test and assessment results show that there is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls, and inspection evidence bears this out.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. There is however a significant number of boys in Key Stage 2 who are not very interested in their work and whose behaviour can be disruptive in lessons. In most lessons in Key Stage 1 children listen carefully to their teachers, concentrate well on their work and take a pride in its completion. A Year 1 boy in an art lesson worked confidently and patiently while drawing flowers and was deservedly pleased with the result. Younger children in the same class worked diligently to create patterns after the teacher had introduced them to the works of William Morris.
8. The school has a sound behaviour policy that is consistently implemented by teachers and teaching support staff. The behaviour of most children in lessons is good, which aids their learning. Children behave well when having lunch and afterwards play well together in the playground. The children are familiar with the school's rules of behaviour and most work within them. There were no exclusions in the last year and during the inspection there were no signs of bullying or other aggressive behaviour.
9. The personal development of pupils is very good and is helped by the school's ethos and its care for its pupils. Opportunities are given in lessons for pupils to exercise their initiative. For example, a Year 2 girl in a science lesson when confronted with a faulty electrical circuit set about with determination to find out why and deduced correctly that the cause was a flat battery. Pupils enjoy the day-by-day jobs given to them by the school, such as taking registers back to the office after marking, and through these duties develop a sense of responsibility and pride.
10. Relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils are good and are a significant factor in children's learning. Children help each other readily in lessons. For instance, a boy was quick to offer assistance to another who was having difficulties in using a particular computer programme. Children reflect on their actions and show sensitivity to the feelings and values of others. In an assembly, following the biblical story of doubting Thomas, children showed an understanding of those who are unsure of what to believe.
11. The attendance rate is in line with the national average and is satisfactory. Most children are punctual for school and registrations are carried out smoothly and promptly at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Lessons begin on time.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. There were serious weaknesses in teaching at the time of the last inspection. These have been very successfully overcome, and teaching is now good overall. Teaching is good or better in 69 per cent of lessons, mainly in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1. It is good in 38 per cent of lessons, very good in 31 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 31 per cent of lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.
13. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects and the pupils they teach. Some very effective use is made of teachers' subject expertise, for instance, in the teaching of design and technology and music, where good subject knowledge promotes good standards. Good knowledge of the subject and of pupils' learning needs was seen, for example, in an English lesson on story book language and punctuation in Class 1. The teacher's knowledge of the pupils and the subject enabled her to teach at a range of different levels so that work was appropriate to all pupils and they were all appropriately challenged by the tasks set and able to make good progress in their learning. Secure knowledge and understanding underpins the teaching of numeracy, seen, for example, as pupils in Class 2 worked on using mental strategies to solve real-life mathematical problems. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject enabled her to explain things clearly, so helping the pupils to understand and make good progress in their learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge in design and technology helps pupils, including the youngest ones at the foundation stage, develop their skills very well.
14. Teachers have good expertise in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, such as phonics, reading and mental arithmetic. For example, the reading skills of the oldest pupils are developed well in regular reading lessons when they work in groups and read plays from scripts. Texts are worthwhile and challenging, including, for example, "Odysseus and the Enchantress". The number skills of the youngest pupils are developed well as they are given regular opportunities for mental calculation, for instance, finding pairs of numbers that total ten, in their head. Pupils in Class 2 learn common spelling patterns, and about suffixes, capital letters and commas, as they work on the shared text, "The Jolly Witch". But, overall, too little is done to develop pupils' writing skills. In particular, pupils have too few opportunities to draft and re-draft and so improve upon their work.
15. Lessons are well planned, daily lesson planning being closely based on longer-term planning and the schemes of work for subjects. Planning for literacy and numeracy are appropriately based on the national strategies, and this effectively ensures that pupils in Year 1, who are divided between two classes, cover the same subject material. Time is appropriately set aside each term for all staff to plan together in detail for the coming term. Subject co-ordinators check one another's plans to see that these ensure a smooth progression in pupils' learning from term to term and from year to year. Teachers assess pupils' progress and attainment well, making use of national and local test and assessment data, optional standard tests, and their own tests and assessments of pupils' achievements. They have compiled a helpful portfolio containing examples of pupils' work in most subjects, levelled according to National Curriculum criteria. They make good use of the information they gather to help them plan their next steps in teaching and match tasks to the learning needs of pupils. This was seen, for example, in a literacy lesson in Class 1, where individual learning needs were met well because the teacher knew what was appropriate for each pupil. Teachers spell out clearly what it is pupils will do in the lesson and what it is intended they will learn. This was seen, for example, in a science lesson on insulating materials in Class 3, where the teacher clearly identified at the outset what the objectives of the lesson were. This means that pupils are clear about what they are to do and it helps them have good understanding of their own learning.
16. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. These are very high at the foundation stage. The impact of this is that a learning environment is created in which pupils are able to make

choices, experiment and are led to evaluate and improve their work. Pupils respond by being enthusiastic and engrossed in their work. They work hard, behave well and enjoy what they do. This was seen, for example, in a very good art lesson in Class 2, where pupils worked on a wide range of activities, including painting, weaving and close observational drawing. The teacher maintained a good relationship with the pupils and the effect was a very productive learning environment, with busy, absorbed pupils being given good guidance, and so making very good progress in their learning. A religious education lesson in Class 2 featured high expectations of pupils' ability to understand figurative language. This provided them with a good level of challenge, to which they responded well, so making good progress in their learning.

17. Teachers use a good range of effective teaching methods, especially at the foundation stage. These enable the needs of all pupils to be met, including those who find learning more difficult. Good use is made of whole-class teaching, for example, in literacy and numeracy lessons, as recommended in the national strategies. Clear demonstrations are given, based on teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding, seen, for example, in an information technology lesson in Class 3. But the need to share one computer between 31 pupils makes learning less effective than it should be, as pupils have to compete for an opportunity to practise the skills being taught. There are many good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups. The pairing of Year 1 with reception children in Class 1 is very effective in promoting the confidence of the youngest children, for example, as they work together using clock faces to tell the time to the hour and half-hour. Group work makes a good contribution to pupils' social development, fostering successfully skills of co-operation and turn-taking. There are some good opportunities for pupils to work independently and record things in their own way, seen, for instance, as pupils in Class 1 investigated things around the school which use electricity. Teachers make good use of questioning to check for understanding and make pupils think. For example, in a Class 2 English lesson questions about the shared text were very carefully targeted to Year 1 and Year 2 pupils individually, with the Year 2 questions being much more demanding. This promotes good learning for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are grouped appropriately to enable them to work at a suitable level and make good progress. They are sometimes helpfully withdrawn from lessons for help in a small group, or supported in class by teachers or classroom assistants.
18. Teachers keep very good order at the foundation stage and in Key Stage 1. Relationships with pupils are very good and this encourages them to behave well, to work very hard and to concentrate very well. This promotes good learning. This was seen, for example, in a very good English lesson in Class 1, where the teacher's very warm relationship with the class inspired good behaviour, enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn, resulting in good progress. In a Class 2 science lesson, the teacher's good rapport with pupils and her good support for them as they tried to answer questions, but found it difficult to express their thoughts, resulted in pupils responding positively to the lesson, behaving well and showing good attitudes to learning. Class control at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, overall. Often, a small number of boys behave poorly in Class 3 and this presents challenges to behaviour management, which teachers generally handle calmly and effectively, 'defusing' the situation skilfully, and not letting things get out of hand. The poor behaviour of these few boys adversely affects their learning, and, on occasion, that of other pupils in the class.
19. Good use is made of the time available for lessons, and this means that pupils work hard and productively. Lessons start promptly and proceed at a brisk pace. This was seen, for example, in a Class 1 lesson in design and technology, as pupils made puppets, which they had designed. Little time was wasted, as a good level of adult support meant that advice was immediately to hand for those experiencing problems, and so they could quickly get on, making good progress in their learning and refining their skills. Support staff, students and volunteer parents are deployed well to help pupils learn, especially at the foundation stage. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson on understanding capacity in Class 1, where all adults were well briefed about their role and offered good support, enabling all pupils to make very good progress in their learning. A wide range of appropriate

resources is used well to support pupils' learning, for example, as pupils investigate insulation in Class 3, using a variety of different insulating materials, including fabrics and aluminium foil. Some appropriate use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning, for example, in art and religious education in Class 2, although access to computers is limited, especially for the oldest pupils in Class 3.

20. Some parents feel that there is too much homework, and others that there is too little. All pupils have reading to do at home, and parents and carers are encouraged to share in this. Overall, there is a satisfactory amount of homework set and this is used appropriately to support pupils' learning in school.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

21. The curriculum for the under fives is good, offering a rich range of well-planned experiences and designed to allow the children good coverage of the desirable learning outcomes for children of this age. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, with a good breadth of provision that gives due weight to the importance of literacy and numeracy but also provides support for the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Some natural links between the subjects are recognised and developed so that art work, for example, arises from lessons in history and science. Just over half of all curriculum time is devoted to literacy and numeracy and, by contrast, a relatively small proportion of time, between seven and eight per cent, is available for science. The school has been following recent guidance in the distribution of time to subject areas, but if standards are to be raised across the whole curriculum, then it will be necessary to review both the balance of time and ways in which work in literacy and numeracy can be used to support learning in other subjects, as is done with art and in some history lessons. This is also true of Key Stage 2. Again the curriculum is satisfactory overall and has good breadth, but the balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
22. The provision for some subjects, such as art, history and geography, is organised into separate blocks of time, so that geography and history, for example, are taught in alternate half terms. The fact that these subjects are taught in modules does affect the progress that pupils make over time, because some of the knowledge and skills that have been learnt are forgotten. Teachers have to spend time repeating past work to bring pupils up to levels already reached before they can move on to new learning. Nevertheless, there has been good improvement since the last inspection. At that time, there were no schemes of work or plans to ensure that pupils made progress in the subjects they were studying and teachers' short-term planning was inadequate. Curriculum planning is now good. There are schemes of work and guidance for all subjects. Teachers meet regularly to review the work that has been done in each key stage and to plan the next round of work so that it builds on what has gone before. The outcomes of assessment are used well to aid planning. For example, analysis of the outcomes of recent statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 1 has been used to modify the curriculum in English. Individual teachers modify their medium and short-term plans on the basis of assessment of how well pupils have met their lesson objectives. If they have not succeeded in gaining knowledge of an aspect of English or mathematics that has been taught, for example, the teacher will adjust her planning so that they have a further opportunity to tackle and master it. All subjects, at both key stages, meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the requirement to teach religious education is met. Both the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well in both key stages.
23. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is partly because equality of opportunity for all is a strength of the school. It is an essential part of their ethos, an explicit aim, and one that they meet well. The school succeeds in being inclusive, seeking to offer the same opportunities to take part and succeed to all, irrespective of academic ability or physical disability. Teachers plan in most of their lessons to provide appropriate work for the lower-attaining pupils and

there is good support from teaching assistants, usually targeted at the pupils with special educational needs, in order to help them to make progress.

24. Health education and sex education are provided appropriately and adequately, as is drugs awareness teaching. There is a good range of additional activities after school, including clubs for information technology, cooking, dance, sewing, recorders and drama amongst others. Despite the small number of pupils and the few teachers in the school, factors that in some schools might lead to little opportunity being offered for sporting activities outside lessons, provision is good. The school takes a full part in the sporting programmes available through the local small-school cluster and the pupils have good opportunities to play football, 'kwik cricket' and athletics and to represent their school in the annual swimming gala.
25. Links with the community support and enhance the curriculum well. The local area is used extensively by the school to provide pupils with first-hand experience of aspects of work in geography and history that are being done in class and this helps to make the work relevant and exciting to the children. Day visits to Norwich, to local farms and the local water treatment works supplement good use of the immediate locality, the local beach and the school's very good nature area and pond. Very good use is made of visitors to the school from the local community who extend pupils' interest and knowledge by recounting their own first-hand experiences. There are many good examples. These include the Suffolk Business Partnership, who made a contribution to numeracy teaching; a local historian who brought the past to life through slides and stories about their village in days gone by; the Suffolk Library Service who contributed to lessons on the use of the library and how to find information; and a visiting poet who held a successful poetry workshop. The local police visit regularly to contribute to personal and social education lessons, as do the local vicar, pastor and Salvation Army representatives. Students from local colleges work in the school to support pupils. There are satisfactory links between the school and local pre-school provision and effective liaison with local middle schools, to ensure curriculum continuity.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

26. The overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. All children under-five benefit from the effective provision for their personal and social development. Observations of work throughout the school indicate that all teachers and ancillary staff support the aims of the school by helping pupils to develop physically, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, when the provision was satisfactory overall.
27. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and is appropriately extended beyond religious education lessons and corporate worship within assemblies. This has improved since the last inspection. Collective worship is used appropriately to promote a sense of wonder and time for reflection, for example, by using the hymns and prayer as well as uplifting music. Time to reflect on pupils' own beliefs, values and experiences is regularly provided in classes, especially in 'circle time', and focuses the minds of the pupils well on how their attitudes and actions can influence other people. There are some planned opportunities for the pupils to experience the awe and wonder of the world. For example, pupils in reception showed real wonder and excitement in science when they examined how much their beans had grown and how different was the rate of growth of those planted in soil compared with those on wet paper.
28. The school provides very well for the moral development of all pupils. It is reinforced by the personal example provided by the staff. A strong moral code is the basis for acceptable behaviour and this is consistently emphasised throughout the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils from Year 1 upwards are able to discuss and decide on the rules for classroom behaviour. As a result they have a good

understanding of what the rules are and the reasons for them. Pupils are held individually responsible for their behaviour, and the reasons for inappropriate behaviour, and why it is inappropriate, are discussed and explored well in 'circle time' sessions or whenever instances of unacceptable behaviour occur. At a whole school level, there is a good framework of values that encourages pupils to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils are commended for their achievements in assembly and appropriate emphasis is placed on celebrating positive behaviour.

29. The school provides very well for pupils' social development, with an appropriate emphasis on consideration, tolerance and understanding that promotes socially acceptable attitudes. Care is taken to ensure that those pupils who have special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school. Boys and girls are provided for equally in all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers are both professional and caring and there is clear evidence of positive and successful relationships between pupils and staff. Outside visits greatly enhance social development for pupils in all years. Almost all pupils cooperate well and those who do not are new to the school, joining late from other schools, and have emotional and behavioural problems. All teachers plan lessons that require pupils to work as part of a group and to cooperate with others. These are almost all mixed-gender groups, except where there is a significant imbalance of boys and girls in the class. In 'circle time', pupils learn how to think and say nice things about each other. Class rules are not just about behaviour, but also about being kind and considerate to others. When a boy was reprimanded for inappropriate behaviour in class, and was obviously sorry and upset, his fellow pupils were observed to be particularly kind and considerate to him in the playground afterwards. They realised that he had done wrong, but wanted to make him happy again because they knew that he was both upset and repentant.
30. Pupils are taught to respect the views of others and their right to be heard and to hold opinions different from their own. It frequently happens that when a child is asked to share work with the class, reads aloud or plays an instrument, there is spontaneous and appreciative applause from his or her classmates. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the community and to learn to care about others in their support of local and international charities. When they give at Harvest Festival, a representative from the Salvation Army comes in to talk to them about the kinds of homes that their offerings have gone to and to explain the need. The school sent many books to South Africa when the pupils discovered that some pupils there had almost no books in their schools. They learn to understand the problems in other countries, such as Kosovo, in drama lessons that are structured to enable them to explore the issues involved and reflect on the feelings and problems of children less fortunate than themselves.
31. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are given effective opportunities to learn more about their own cultural traditions, through religious education lessons and performances of the Nativity, for example, and they broaden their knowledge and understanding of other cultures through literature, art, music, geography and religious education. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to enhance their awareness of literature, music and art through visits from authors and visits to museums. Stories from other cultures studied in literacy lessons extend their knowledge and understanding of the diversity of cultures in the world outside Corton. Work in history and geography, on Greece, India and the Scottish islands, broadens their horizons. Attractive displays and a range of appropriate books, artefacts and other learning resources contribute towards pupils' understanding and respect for Western art and music as well as some of the customs and beliefs of other cultures. The school has its own well-travelled pet, a soft toy called Sammy, who accompanies children on holidays to distant places and returns with photographs and postcards. This fluffy explorer has his own displays, celebrating life in New Zealand, Spain, London and the Open Air Museum of Victorian Life at Beamish. This is an excellent way of interesting children of this age in the world around them.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school takes very good care of its pupils and there is a positive and caring ethos. The school offers a safe environment where all staff are consistent in their expectations of high standards of behaviour. Harassment and bullying are strongly discouraged and sanctions are available should they occur. Good behaviour is promoted very successfully. Teachers are good role models in terms of their behaviour and caring attitudes and the children respond well to this. Support staff and mid-day assistants are very caring towards the children and support them at all times.
33. Very good arrangements are in hand to ensure that health and safety requirements are fully met. Risk assessments are regularly carried out, recorded and acted on. There are regular fire drills and all fire fighting equipment is tested annually. Several staff are qualified in first aid and in addition have received training in dealing with emergencies arising from food allergies. The holding of registers in the classrooms mentioned in the last inspection report does not now take place and all registers are held in the office, from where they are taken to assembly points in the event of a fire.
34. There are very good arrangements for child protection and the headteacher is the designated person for child protection. The headteacher and staff keep abreast of developments in child protection by attending appropriate training programmes. It is planned that some governors will also attend future courses. Good records are kept of child protection matters and these are securely held. When necessary the school does not hesitate to contact outside agencies to seek specialist help.
35. There are good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. This is done by the school secretary and all unauthorised absences are carefully followed up. There are some instances of parents taking holidays in term time but the school does its best to discourage this.
36. Corton is a small school where teachers and support staff know all pupils well and monitor their personal development informally on a daily basis. In lessons teachers are well aware of the needs of their pupils, including those having special educational needs, and make appropriate provision for them. The school maintains helpful records of pupils' progress and personal development and uses the information to plan improvements and raise pupils' achievements.
37. There has been significant improvement in the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection, when assessment was described as insufficiently rigorous and inconsistent. The quality of assessment throughout the school is now good. Assessment information is used well to set targets for pupils, to show them how to improve their work. It is also used to modify future work so that it takes into account the progress pupils have made, and to adapt the curriculum as the result of analysis of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance in their National Curriculum tests.
38. Procedures for assessing the educational needs of children under five are effective in supporting planning. Liaison between staff in Class 1 supports progression well. Baseline assessments are carried out and the outcomes are now being used to forecast and help to track pupils' progress through the school. Procedures for the day-to-day assessment of pupils in English, mathematics and science are good overall and are used effectively by individual teachers to set targets and plan their work. Targets are written so that they can be easily understood by pupils and they are shared with their parents so that they can help their children at home. In other subjects, assessment is more variable in quality. Teachers know their pupils, and their strengths and weaknesses, well. In this closely-knit community, all pupils are known by all teachers to a degree not normally found. It is not as necessary as it is in some schools for information to be recorded about what pupils know, understand and can do across the curriculum. Nevertheless, the system of 'ticksheets' that still exists in some subjects is not

detailed enough to track and record progress and is being replaced, in design and technology for example, with more useful and effective systems.

39. Test and assessment results are analysed carefully and possible reasons for variations in achievement are identified. A range of appropriate information, including helpful advice from the local education authority, is being used to help the senior managers of the school to assess and evaluate the school's performance.
40. There are clear learning goals set for each lesson and shared effectively with pupils. On-going assessment in lessons is individual and of a good quality in all classes and helps pupils to improve their work. There are some good examples of effective marking and the teachers make useful comments that are both encouraging and set targets for the older pupils to help them to make progress. Annual reports to parents provide detailed and accurate assessment information. They give targets for the future to ensure that parents understand where improvement is needed, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Samples of work are kept as a record of pupils' progress from year to year. Teachers have a good range of test results and other assessment information for each pupil in their classes in order to help them assess and monitor the progress individuals are making. There are good assessment systems to identify and monitor pupils with special educational needs.
41. As the school adopts new schemes of work, it is also adopting the assessment systems that accompany them. Assessment is developing well and the growing commitment to it and the developing realisation of its usefulness on the part of all teachers is an important factor in the continuing improvements that the school is making.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

42. The school has a very effective partnership with its parents. Parents' views of the school reflected in the parents' questionnaire and at the pre-inspection parents' meeting were very positive. They are pleased with their children's academic progress and personal development and are very supportive of the school. Responses to the parents' questionnaire also showed that parents consider teachers to be very approachable and they appreciate the opportunities to discuss concerns about their children's education.
43. Some parents help regularly in the school on activities such as hearing pupils read and assisting in art and technology lessons. They also accompany pupils on school visits. There is also an active parents' association which holds fund raising events and donates valuable contributions, such as equipment for physical education. These events are well supported by the local community and additionally provide good opportunities for the school, parents, children and the community to meet socially. The school's very good partnership with parents and also with the local community is a beneficial factor in the children's education.
44. The quality of information provided for parents is good and makes a good contribution to the school and parent partnership. The school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are very informative and well presented, but the information on the school's provision for disabled pupils and attendance rates is not clear enough. There are good monthly newsletters on events at the school and other matters of school life. Parents receive detailed annual reports on their children that enable them to see their children's progress over the year. Reports are well written and show pupils' academic and personal achievements and include appropriate targets for improvement.
45. All parents have a copy of the home/school agreement that explains the respective responsibilities of parents and the school. The school also provides other useful information to parents to encourage them to assist their children, such as a leaflet on how to help their children with reading. Some work is

also sent home, so that it can be shared with parents, such as mathematical games and science worksheets. Parents are asked to make comments in the children's reading record books. Apart from encouraging parents to help their children at home, these books also provide a useful means of communication between parents and the school.

46. There are two meetings a year for parents to discuss with staff how their children are getting on and there are also open curriculum evening designed to show how the school covers some of the subjects of the curriculum. Parents new to the school are invited to a separate meeting to meet the headteacher, and a video showing the school at work is available for them to borrow.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

47. At the time of the last inspection there were serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. Things have improved substantially since then. The school is now very well led and managed by the headteacher. Staff with subject management responsibilities share these fairly and effectively. The governors are very effective in fulfilling their duties and shaping the direction of the school. They have a very clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The governors and headteacher have a clear focus on school improvement, well informed by careful monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. The very good leadership and management has resulted in significant improvement since the last inspection, most notable in the quality of teaching and in standards, especially in English and mathematics and particularly at Key Stage 2.
48. The school's aims are published in the prospectus. These are to develop a love of learning, provide the skills pupils will need to be useful members of society, and value good behaviour, politeness, energy and enthusiasm. The school also aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and encourage high achievement consistent with potential. There is an appropriate equal opportunities policy, which stresses that there are no barriers to opportunity at the school, regardless of gender or any other individual differences. In practice, attainment is not gender biased: boys and girls achieve equally well. The aims are generally reflected well in the work of the school, and met, although the curriculum is not as well balanced as it might be. Boys and girls and pupils from varying backgrounds all have equal access to the full curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. Pupils who find learning more difficult are well supported and helped to have access to the same curriculum content as their peers. The needs of higher-attaining pupils are well met, for example, as they are given independent tasks to do to extend their learning skills in a Class 1 science lesson. Most pupils behave well and enjoy learning. They are enthusiastic about their work.
49. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning effectively and gives supportive feedback to teachers on their work. The main emphasis in monitoring lessons has appropriately been on literacy and numeracy. There has also been some monitoring of music and religious education. The local education authority's advisory staff have also monitored teaching and learning in some subjects. Governors have allocated time for the headteacher and all teaching staff to monitor one another's planning for the work to be covered in each term, checking that a smooth progression in pupils' learning is ensured from term to term and year to year. The monitoring of teaching and learning and of planning has effectively contributed to the raising of standards and improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The headteacher, governors and the local education authority carefully monitor standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and use the information gathered to set targets for improvement. Good use is made of information gathered from local and national tests and optional standard tests in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4. The setting of targets for improvement has a positive impact on raising standards.

50. The headteacher has been appraised in accordance with the requirements of the local education authority and she is a trained appraiser. The school has appropriate plans to put into operation performance management for all staff when it is introduced nationally in the coming school year.
51. Governors are closely involved together with the headteacher in setting the agenda for school improvement. The current school improvement plan appropriately focuses on five main priorities: personal, social and health education; the revised Curriculum 2000; science; performance management and building developments. These priorities are arrived at through a good process of consultation between staff, the headteacher and governors. Governors regularly monitor progress on school improvement plan targets, through reports by the headteacher and discussions with members of staff. The current focus on science and Curriculum 2000 are fully consistent with the need to review the proportions of teaching time given to subjects of the curriculum, particularly science.
52. The governors, headteacher and staff share a clear commitment to school improvement. After the last inspection they were determined to address the serious weaknesses identified and they have consequently been successful in making very good improvement, especially in leadership and management, standards achieved and the quality of teaching provided. The school is now well placed to continue to improve. This is evident, for example, in the good planning for school improvement and in the clarity with which the headteacher and governors identify the school's strengths and weaknesses.
53. The school's budget is carefully planned and managed to support school improvement. For example, the budget for the current year has been planned to take into account the costs involved in meeting the targets in the school improvement plan concerned with the curriculum, performance management and planned building developments. A committee of governors and staff meet regularly to consider the termly budget statements and monitor costs and spending and they report appropriately to the full governing body at regular intervals. Day-to-day financial administration is efficient and satisfactory use is made of new technology, including information technology. The school is in the process of transferring administrative data from an old to a new computer system. There are secure arrangements for ordering and paying for goods and services, and the school takes good care to obtain the best possible value for money, for example, by negotiating 'small school' discounts. Funding allocated for specific purposes, such as that designated for pupils with special educational needs, is appropriately used to support pupils' learning.
54. There are sufficient numbers of appropriately trained and qualified teachers to meet the needs of pupils and teach the full National Curriculum and religious education. There are five support staff, which is quite a generous number, and they are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning, particularly those at the foundation stage. Newly appointed staff are inducted satisfactorily, mainly through informal support offered by colleagues. They are invited to spend a day in school before taking up their post and they take part in training days before the start of the school year. The school has the potential to be an effective provider of teacher training. The accommodation is not fully adequate to meet the needs of the pupils and teach the full curriculum. Elements of the physical education curriculum have to be taught at a neighbouring school because of lack of facilities. The oldest pupils are rather crowded into an outside classroom, which does not have toilets or running water. The lack of water restricts the teaching of some subjects, such as science and art. There are adequate resources for the teaching of all subjects and these are in good condition.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

55. In order to improve standards and the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- Review the balance of time given to the subjects of the curriculum, especially science, in the light of school improvement plan priorities and the revised Curriculum 2000; (paragraphs 21, 22, 89)
- Improve pupils' writing skills by teaching them to use drafting techniques to refine the *quality* of their work, with a particular emphasis on the effectiveness of communication and the language used; and by providing many opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes and different audiences.(paragraphs 14, 71)

56. Other minor weaknesses:

- The governors' annual report to parents does not report clearly enough on attendance rates and the provision for disabled pupils. (paragraph 44)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	31	38	31	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	70
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

#### **Special educational needs**

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	5	11	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	5
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (100)	94 (88)	100 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (89)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	5	4
	Girls	11	11	10
	Total	15	16	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (88)	100 (100)	88 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	70
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

***Teachers and classes*****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	161303
Total expenditure	164831
Expenditure per pupil	2461
Balance brought forward from previous year	6594
Balance carried forward to next year	3066

***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	70
Number of questionnaires returned	34

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	36	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	32	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	38	0	15	3
The teaching is good.	56	44	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	35	15	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	24	9	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	3	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	41	6	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	32	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	29	3	0	0

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

57. Pupils enter the school at the age of four with attainment which is broadly average in all the six areas of learning for children under five: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. They are very well taught, and given good support by skilled support staff, and as a result they learn very well. By the time they move into Year 1 their attainment in all six areas of learning is likely to exceed national expectations. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when provision for the children under five was unsatisfactory. The curriculum for children under five is appropriately planned to take into account the national desirable learning outcomes and to lead smoothly into Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum when they are ready.

#### **Personal and social development**

58. The provision for children's personal and social development is very good. They come into school confidently in the morning and settle happily to independent activities on their own initiative, such as working on the computer, playing with bricks or counting. The teacher takes the opportunity to talk to parents as the children settle in. The children behave well and are learning appropriate classroom habits, such as putting up their hands to ask or answer a question, and not calling out. They know the difference between right and wrong, for example, they are clear that it is right to share resources such as the clocks fairly, and that it is wrong to take something, which someone else is using. There are many good opportunities for the children to work in pairs and small groups, and this promotes their social development as they learn to cooperate and take turns fairly. A very good opportunity for personal and social development was seen in a lesson on telling the time, where foundation stage children were paired with Year 1 pupils to set the clock to the hour and half hour. Working with an older pupil gave the younger ones confidence. The children have good opportunities to treat living things with care and respect, for instance they have had visiting kittens, chinchillas and rabbits and they had a visit from a baby in connection with the 'Ourselves' theme being followed. They develop their awareness of, and sensitivity to, those whose cultures and beliefs are different from their own, for example, through looking at books from a range of different cultures in literacy lessons, through dressing up in clothes from other lands and through listening and dancing to music from different cultures. They show a range of feelings such as wonder, joy and sorrow, for instance they respond with wonder as they see their beans develop and grow much better in soil than in water alone. They celebrate religious and cultural events, for example, taking part in an Easter bonnet competition and the Christmas concert. They are learning to concentrate and persevere well, seen, for example, as they fill containers with water and carefully count how many they need, as they learn about capacity. The children have good opportunities for personal independence and the school encourages parents to help their children develop independent habits before they start school, in such things as taking themselves to the toilet and washing their hands.

#### **Language and literacy**

59. Language and literacy is promoted well. The children have many good opportunities to listen carefully to stories, songs and rhymes, for example, in literacy lessons and as they sing together at the end of the morning. They are encouraged to talk about their experiences, for instance, in Monday morning 'news' sessions, as they talk about what they have done at the weekend or about visits to the doctor, the dentist or the hospital. They are encouraged to express how they feel and to talk about things that make them happy or afraid. There are good opportunities for the children

to take part in role play, which promotes their speaking and listening skills well and also contributes positively to social development, for instance, as they enjoy playing in the 'Rainbow Café'. They have many good opportunities to use and enjoy books. They know how books 'work', that print carries meaning, that we read from left to right in English, that pages turn and that we read from the front of the book to the back. They recognise their own names by the age of five, for example, on their coat peg and on their drawer. They also recognise the names of some of their friends, for instance, on their books. They learn to recognise the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and they have many good opportunities for sound and letter games. Some of the targets set for their learning appropriately concern knowing letter sounds. By the age of five the children write their own name, most making appropriate use of upper and lower-case letters, for example, when labelling their work.

## **Mathematics**

60. The children's mathematical skills are developed well. They use mathematical language such as 'bigger' and 'smaller', as they sort the 'compare bears'. As they learn about capacity, they use words such as 'full' and 'empty'. They measure one another, for example, with bricks, and talk about 'shorter' and 'taller'. They play with the cars and place them 'in front of' and 'behind'. They recognise the numbers one to ten and enjoy putting them in order. They gain an awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction in practical settings, for example, as they count the number of red teddies, the number of blue ones, work out how many there are altogether, how many more red ones there are than blue ones, and so on. They record the outcomes of some of their problem-solving activities, by drawing or writing the numbers.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

61. Knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted well. The children are taken on walks around the playground and then to the village, the beach and the old station. They talk about what they see there and record their visits, for example, by drawing and writing about what they have seen and done. They explore some of the features of living things, such as the beans they plant and grow in water only or in soil. They have good opportunities to look at natural objects such as stones and shells, and made objects such as electrical appliances, and they record some of their observations by drawing them. The children have access to a wide range of materials and equipment with which they cut, join, fold and build, for example, 'junk' modelling materials, play dough, clay and plasticine. They also have access to a good range of construction kits. There is good access to technological equipment, such as the computer and 'listening centre', which the children enjoy operating as they listen to stories.

## **Physical development**

62. The children's physical development is promoted well. They learn to move with increasing confidence and skill, for example, as they climb and balance on the outdoor equipment and on the benches in the hall, and as they dance. They have suitable access to an outdoor area and there are large wheeled toys which are used outdoors in summer and in the covered swimming pool area when the pool is taken down in the winter. Their small muscle development and control is promoted well, through many good opportunities to cut, stick and build, using appropriate tools such as scissors and glue sticks.

## **Creative development**

63. Creative development is promoted well. The children have good opportunities to explore sound, for example, they have regular music lessons when they sing and use the musical instruments. They enjoy listening to music and playing listening games. They have some good opportunities to respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, touch and feel, for instance, they have explored the senses in science and experienced the smell of things such as lemon and pepper and the taste of different flavoured crisps. There are good opportunities for the children to move to music and dance.

## **ENGLISH**

64. Standards of attainment in English when children start school are as expected for their age. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, when pupils are aged seven, and also when they transfer to middle school at the age of nine, standards are above average overall. They were also above average in the 1999 national tests and assessments, although comparisons from one year to the next must be treated with caution because of the often small numbers of pupils involved, for example, there are only eight Year 2 pupils at present. Standards would be higher overall if it were not for the relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs within the small groups in Years 2 and 4. Of those pupils in Key Stage 2 who have joined the school late, many have had disrupted schooling, are on the special educational needs register and have not had the benefit of the good education the school provides through Key Stage 1. Some of these are lower attaining pupils who adversely affect the levels overall at the end of the final year. When compared with 'similar' schools, standards in the national tests at the end of 1999 were below average in writing, but average in reading. Over the last four years, standards have been above the national average for both boys and girls overall and have risen in line with the rise nationally. However, standards in reading have been consistently higher than those in writing. Reading is consistently above average, writing close to average over time.
65. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations by the end of Year 4. Most pupils show increasing confidence when speaking to adults, are articulate and listen carefully, but there is a small number, with special educational needs, who find it difficult to explain their ideas in any depth and cannot concentrate for long periods when listening, sometimes interrupting because of a lack of social skills. Higher-attaining pupils are fluent and articulate speakers of English, when talking about their reading books, for example. Speaking and listening skills are developed well at the foundation stage. At the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils listen attentively and respectfully to adults and other children. They respect the views of others. They speak clearly and confidently and are attaining above average standards overall.
66. Progress across the school is good. Many opportunities are planned to encourage pupils to increase their vocabulary and use of spoken English. For example, at the foundation stage and in Year 1, pupils enthusiastically report what they and their families did through the weekend in 'news time'. In Year 4, most pupils discussed traffic safety and the reasons for using cars less frequently intelligently and cogently. All teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to work in groups and collaborate together. Members of the teaching support staff make an effective contribution to the progress of all pupils. They clarify questions, explain new vocabulary and encourage pupils to offer answers. No answer or comment made by a pupil is ever dismissed by any teacher and this builds an atmosphere of trust in which self-esteem and self-confidence are enriched. Teachers are very good role-models for pupils to follow in valuing and respecting the ideas and opinions of both other pupils and adults.

67. Standards in reading are above average overall at both key stages, although a small minority of pupils with special educational needs read well below the expected levels for their age. The majority of pupils are good at reading texts that are appropriate for their age, and retell stories with confidence. A feature of the school, at both key stages, is how well pupils put expression into their reading, especially when reading passages of dialogue. Higher-attaining pupils do this particularly well, taking full account of punctuation. The detailed work on texts in literacy sessions is improving older pupils' ability to understand character and to understand the techniques that writers use, such as simile and alliteration, to make their writing more effective.

68. Skills in writing are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine. By the time they are nine, pupils write for a range of different purposes. Teachers work hard to improve the pupils' writing skills. As pupils move through the school they write more imaginative stories but all except the higher attainers make spelling and punctuation errors. All pupils are encouraged to enjoy poetry and some higher-attaining pupils show skills in expression. A Year 2 boy wrote:

*I love the Spring,  
I like the way the leaves grow  
Bright green,  
Like hopping frogs*

69. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 show a good feeling for language. In a story about escaping from a forest fire, a girl wrote:

*They both got into the rough canoe and sailed at great speed until they came to a massive, long and rocky stream. They tumbled down, the boat going from side to side. They were holding on to each other for dear life.*

70. Lower-attaining pupils experience difficulty in expressing ideas and have poor spelling ability. This means that they have more confidence when following formal written exercises than in story writing. By the end of Year 2, all the pupils join letters correctly and their handwriting is legible.

71. Overall, progress is satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to draft their work and use opportunities in the literacy hour to draw pupils' attention to good features of writing and teach them the correct terms for adjective, noun, and so on. Too often, however, the drafting work concentrates too much on spelling correction and too little on the skills of communication. Considerable work has been done to improve pupils' spelling skills and results in national tests have improved as a result, but this is not always reflected in the way pupils spell in their continuous writing. Teachers mark all written work carefully and thoroughly, often giving detailed oral feedback. Pupils are not encouraged enough to self-correct and so do not always learn the words they get wrong. There is evidence in the books of teachers giving pupils the correct spelling and then a short time later, the pupils making the same mistake again. Writing does not always have a clear purpose or audience and teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for the refinement of written work. Low-attaining pupils make good progress in many lessons as group activities are well supported. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in acquiring basic skills in class, because of the individual support they are given by both teachers and teaching support staff. On occasions, the work is not sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils.

72. Learning skills are generally good. Pupils are always ready to apply intellectual and creative effort in class, as a result of their own positive attitudes, the good learning ethos in the school and the good relationships that teachers maintain and foster in class. They show interest and sustain

concentration well, except for a small minority who have difficulty listening for sustained periods. All pupils understand what they are doing because of the clear instructions their teachers give them. They are keen to participate and as a result they are not afraid of making mistakes, particularly in oral work. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they enjoy their lessons. There are good relationships in all classes and personal development is fostered well. In all lessons, the majority of pupils co-operate and collaborate well in small group work.

73. Teaching is good overall. In lessons observed, it was never unsatisfactory. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that there is much good teaching, but its impact on standards in writing is sometimes disappointing. Individual targets are set for reading and the targets set for writing are often referred to by pupils and teachers. This practice is contributing to the progress pupils are making in the subject. Lessons are interesting and motivate pupils to learn. All teachers speak clearly, providing very good role models of spoken English. Teachers have good subject knowledge, mostly explain concepts clearly and introduce pupils to relevant technical vocabulary. Group activities are usually well matched to pupils' needs. Relationships are good and teachers manage behaviour well, ensuring a calm and purposeful working atmosphere for learning. Teachers' questioning skills are good, effectively checking understanding and reinforcing previous learning. Resources are very well prepared and used effectively to interest and enthuse pupils. A scrutiny of pupils' work and of displays shows examples of pupils' written work in all relevant subjects. There are good examples of written work in science, religious education, history and the use of stories about journeys to enhance geography.
74. The subject is well managed by the subject coordinator. The support for teachers is good and the literacy strategy training has been carried out thoroughly. A broad and balanced programme of work has been produced that provides a good range of structured tasks. The coordinator monitors the subject effectively and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in English across the school. She is always available to give useful guidance and support to the teachers who need it. The teaching of English and the quality of provision have improved since the last report. Standards have risen at both key stages.

### **National Literacy Strategy**

75. The literacy strategy is well managed by the English coordinator and monitored well by the headteacher. The school has a clear policy for teaching literacy and, using information from the on-going monitoring of the strengths and weaknesses of the work being done in classes, is modifying the format of literacy lessons to make them meet the needs of pupils even more successfully.
76. The well-planned and well-taught lessons in all year groups are raising standards in literacy, especially in reading. The school is modifying the teaching of writing skills in order to give the pupils more opportunities to write at length for real purposes and audiences. In every lesson, including those in other subjects, teachers pay good attention to the development of spelling and vocabulary. Spelling scores in standardised tests are beginning to rise as a result, though the improvements are not as apparent in pupils' own writing. In science, teachers emphasise and explain the technical vocabulary of the subject. In music, teachers insist that pupils learn and use the correct musical terms, such as *ostinato* and *dynamics*, from an early age.
77. Although not part of the literacy strategy, confidence in oral work in all lessons enables the skills of collaboration and negotiation to develop. Pupils listen attentively and respond appropriately. There are good examples of discussion and debate initiated by pupils across all areas of the curriculum, including lessons in personal and social education. As they become confident speakers, so pupils' confidence and competence as writers develop too. Pupils in both key stages

read regularly. Classroom book collections, the school library and pupils' own written work are used well for this. Pupils are avid readers: they are keen to talk about their reading and to update their reading logs.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78. In the 1999 national tests and assessments for seven year olds standards were above average compared to all schools nationally, and average compared to 'similar' schools. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently above average by the time pupils are aged seven. The provisional results of the 2000 national tests and assessments appear to confirm that standards are currently above the national average. Standards have risen since the last inspection, when they were in line with national averages.
79. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine standards are in line with national expectations. This too represents an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average.
80. The youngest children at the foundation stage are very well taught, and this helps them reach high standards in mathematics by the time they are five. For example, they regularly practise their skills in mental calculation, such as finding pairs of numbers that make ten. In lessons on time they learn to tell the time to the hour and half hour, using analogue clocks. They count from one to 12 round the clock face, and as a group they count the minutes, 0 to 60. The youngest children are very proud of their ability to mark in the time correctly on the teacher's 'big clock' and the others respond with a round of applause. By the end of the lesson, most know that the big hand is on the number 12 for 'o'clock' and on the number six for 'half-past'. They learn to understand capacity, and the need for standard measures such as litres. They appreciate that the teacher's handful and a child's handful contain different amounts, and that therefore a 'handful' is not a very useful measure. Many realise that the height or width of a container does not necessarily determine its capacity relative to other containers. The standards achieved surpass expectations for children of this age.
81. The very good teaching is characterised by very good knowledge of the subject and of the children and their learning needs. This enables teachers to explain and demonstrate things clearly, in a way that is meaningful and interesting to the children, for example, as the need for standard measures of capacity is demonstrated and children are skilfully led to understand the point. Teachers have a very good relationship with the children, and this means that pupils behave well and pay close attention and are so able to make very good progress in their learning. Good skilled support for the youngest children is well guided by teachers, who produce helpful guidance notes, for example, on teaching the children about capacity and about telling the time.
82. By the time they are seven the good teaching pupils receive maintains above average standards. Examination of all the work they have done this year shows that they make good progress in their learning. They order the numbers 1 – 100 correctly. They add coins to make a given sum, such as  $20p + 20p + 2p = 42p$ . They partition two-digit numbers into tens and units. They know some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes, such as a cube, a cuboid and a cylinder and they measure in centimetres, for example, their stride and how far they can jump. Pupils have good skills in mental calculation, for example, they double numbers such as six, seven and ten in their head. They use mental strategies to solve real-life problems, most exceeding expectations for their age. The good teaching pupils receive features good class control, so that pupils are attentive and well-behaved and learn well. Good use is made of questioning, carefully targeted to pupils of different ages and ability. This means that all pupils are appropriately challenged and helped to make progress in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils are helped to have good

understanding of their own learning, seen, for example, in a lesson in Class 2 where care was taken at the outset to help pupils understand the practical applications of mathematics to real life. Planning is good and clearly spells out what pupils will do and what they are to learn.

83. The nine year olds add and subtract hundreds, tens and units. They use data they are given and represent it in a graph. They find the perimeter of shapes, such as different sized badges and know what a fraction is, and, for example, that one third is one of three equal parts. Pupils are given good opportunities for mental calculation, for example, as the teacher thinks of a number and they try to work out what it is, asking fraction-related questions, such as, "Can it be divided into quarters?" The teaching they receive is satisfactory and it has contributed to a rise in standards since the last inspection to the current level, which is in line with national expectations for pupils of this age. Pupils' attention is gained well at the start of lessons and good use is made of praise to encourage good behaviour and concentration. The few boys who misbehave and tend to disrupt others' learning are calmly corrected, without making a big issue of it. But the teaching is not always clear enough for pupils to understand what is required of them, and some of the younger girls in particular can be left confused and so learn little in the lesson.
84. Mathematics is managed well by the subject coordinator in cooperation with colleagues. There is some good monitoring of teaching and learning, particularly in connection with the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been successfully introduced this year and is enhancing pupils' enjoyment of the subject. Standards are monitored closely by the headteacher, the governors and the local education authority and appropriate targets for improvement are set in cooperation between these three. The monitoring of teaching and standards has made an important contribution to the raising of standards throughout the school since the last inspection. Resources for learning are satisfactory and they are used well. Some appropriate use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning.

## SCIENCE

85. In the 1999 teachers' assessments standards in science reached by the seven year olds were below average, both in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level, Level 2 and those reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum. The school has carefully analysed these results, and identified where there were weaknesses, for example, in work on materials and their properties and physical processes. As a result, they have been able to modify their teaching and so standards have risen this year and the inspection shows that they are now in line with national averages. The provisional results of the 2000 national assessments confirm that standards are better than they were last year. At the time of the last inspection standards achieved by the pupils aged nine, when they transfer to middle school, were below national expectations. Standards have risen since then, because of improvement in the quality of teaching, and inspection evidence shows that they now meet national expectations.
86. The youngest children are taught well and so they make good progress in their learning. They know, for example, that everyday appliances use electricity and that a piano, for instance, does not use electricity but a keyboard does. They know about safety with electrical appliances and that you should not touch them with wet hands, or in the bathroom. The good teaching they receive is characterised by good class control and warm relationships, and this ensures that pupils behave well and pay close attention. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and so they are able to explain and demonstrate things clearly, and ask appropriate questions to make the children think. Lessons are well planned and spell out clearly what children will do and learn. Good use is made of whole-class teaching to introduce topics and appropriate group and individual tasks are set to give children the opportunity to learn actively, for example, identifying and cutting out and sticking on the 'house' illustrations of electrical appliances found in

magazines. Year 1 pupils are given good opportunities for independent learning, for example, as they tour the school looking for electrical appliances, recording these on paper in their own way. This sort of activity makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and gives them confidence in their own abilities.

87. Pupils aged seven are taught well and this good teaching has contributed to the rise in standards in science this year. They know, for example, about some of the different sources of light in their environment, such as the computer screen and they compare the brightest and dimmest sources of light in a dark place, such as a cupboard. This knowledge and understanding is in line with expectations for pupils of this age. They do some good work on living things and have very helpfully visited the Carlton Marshes environmental education centre and collected and identified freshwater animals and 'bugs' from grass sweeping. They know about some of the properties of materials, such as flexibility, and that some tear or stretch or are transparent or translucent. The knowledge and understanding of electricity gained in Class 1 is built on well, for example, as pupils learn about electrical circuits and experiment to see what makes them work. The good teaching they receive is characterised by the good use of questions, when good support is given to pupils to help them explain their ideas. Lessons are well planned and pupils are helped to have good understanding of their own learning as the objectives of lessons are spelled out to them at the outset. Tasks are well designed to match the needs and capabilities of pupils, for example as they try out different batteries and bulbs in an electrical circuit.
88. The teaching of the oldest pupils is satisfactory and it has contributed to the raising of standards since the last inspection. These pupils build on their knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. They have some good opportunities to find out things for themselves, for example, as they investigate the absorbency of different types of paper and the properties that make some materials good insulators. They have a good idea of what is involved in a fair test, and can say, for example, why it is important to use the same sized piece of paper and the same amount of water as they investigate absorbency. They know that some changes to materials are reversible and others are not, for example, investigating separating liquid and solid mixtures. Their achievements are in line with expectations for their age. The teaching they receive features clear explanations and demonstrations, based on the teacher's good subject knowledge and understanding. However, the progress of the class as a whole is slowed down as a few lower-attaining pupils fidget and call out, sometimes making silly or unpleasant remarks about other pupils' work. This means that the teacher has to break off what she is doing to get quiet. The few poorly behaved boys disrupt not only their own learning, but that of the rest of the class.
89. The proportion of time allocated to science is low. It is around the lowest quartile by national comparisons at Key Stage 1, and lower at Key Stage 2. As part of its school improvement plan for science and in preparation for the revised Curriculum 2000, the school should review the time it allocates to science in relation to other subjects, in order to further raise standards. Science is well led and managed by the subject coordinator in cooperation with colleagues. Planning for lessons is appropriately monitored to check that there is a smooth progression in pupils' learning from term to term and from year to year. Resources are adequate and good use is made of them to promote pupils' learning.

## **ART**

90. There are very good displays of pupils' art work around the classrooms and corridors that both celebrate children's achievements and help to stimulate and motivate others.
91. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above expectations, with pupils achieving well. This is because of the devotion and commitment to art of the Key Stage 1 teachers, who give it a high

priority as an expressive medium for their pupils. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is also above national expectations and the majority of pupils achieve well, despite the relatively restricted time for art, which has to alternate with other foundation subjects. Again the progress made by pupils is a tribute to the talents of the teachers who use the time available so effectively.

92. At the end of Year 2, pupils have studied marshland environments. They have collected samples of seeds, grasses and flowers and then produced a varied and good range of art work based on the shapes and colours they found. They make tiny pictures using only found materials to illustrate the countryside they observed. They use paints to recreate the colours of the marshes, mixing colours skilfully. Weaving techniques are used well to produce simple tapestries of colour, the pupils choosing threads carefully to match the colours and the moods of the marshes. Ambitious appliqué work is done, following study of similar work by skilled craftspersons, recreating the colours and features of the marshes, based on their meticulous observational sketches.
93. There are similar examples of good work in Key Stage 2. Skills in observational drawing are extended further, to include a range of shading techniques, including cross hatching and regular mark making, to give added solidity and detail to their sketches. Attractive repeating patterns have been produced using information technology. Tiny icons indicate their appreciation of classical art. With a focus on tone and shape, colour and pattern, pupils have drawn and painted their own pictures in a similar style to the ones they have studied by Kandinsky and Franz Marc. They have studied artwork in advertisements and packaging and understand something of how it can be used to persuade people to buy. All this builds on the good work done in Years 1 and 2, as well as lively and imaginative work in reception that builds children's confidence and skills well. In all years there is evidence of good drawing skills in work linked to history.
94. Teaching in art is good overall. It was very good in lessons seen, but the development of skills and progress is good rather than very good over time because of restrictions on the time for art. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers give clear instructions and direction and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. A good working environment is generated in which pupils are encouraged to try hard and do their best. Pupils' response to art is good. Children are motivated and enthusiastic. They concentrate and work productively, enjoying the opportunities to work creatively and expressively. In a very good Year 2 art lesson, pupils concentrated intently, trying hard to reach the standard set by the teacher and greatly enjoyed the work they were doing.
95. There is good leadership of art and a good overview of the subject and the areas that need to be developed in the school. Improvement since the last report has been good, with a significant improvement in standards, which were unsatisfactory at both key stages.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. Pupils make good progress as a result of the very good teaching, that builds skills and knowledge progressively throughout the school. There has been good improvement since the last report.
97. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make a range of attractive toys, using a good variety of design and technology techniques, including pulleys and levers. They have made *Incy Wincy Spider* models that run up and down a thread. Their work in designing and making puppets is good. They disassembled a number of different types of puppet to find out they worked and then each chose the type to make and designed their own, individually. A wide range of skills was involved in the making, including stitching, pasting, gluing and cutting. The resulting puppets were attractive and worked well.

98. There is a good range of work in Key Stage 2. Pupils design pages for a 'pop-up' book on the alphabet to amuse and educate younger children. They all have very individual ideas and show a good understanding of a wide range of mechanisms to 'animate' their letters. Again, the principles of design and technology are applied well. A good number of similar books were examined and mock-ups of the mechanisms were constructed first in paper and card. The pupils used the knowledge and practical experience they had gained from this to help them to design their own page and then began work on a variety of individual and exciting page ideas.
99. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good at both key stages. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection. Teachers provide pupils with a good range of opportunities to develop a variety of skills such as cutting, sticking and joining. Clear planning, using national guidelines, ensures that pupils progressively develop skills in the use of materials and tools. The design element of the subject is very well developed in classes from reception onwards and pupils are given very good opportunities to turn their designs into real objects. Teachers encourage pupils to design and evaluate their projects effectively.
100. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and this is a key factor in the rise in standards in this subject since the last inspection. The planning that has been developed shows that the programmes of study within the National Curriculum are being covered well.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

101. One lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, but no lessons were seen in Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on the evidence of this lesson, evidence of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and class and school displays. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and this is similar to the last inspection. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Year 4.
102. Pupils in Key Stage 1 observe features of their own locality. They record the buildings they see in the immediate area. They compare their own village with villages elsewhere, such as remote Scottish islands. They list the differences and similarities in housing, environment, transport and leisure and shopping facilities. They have a secure understanding of the effect of locality on people's lives. They give their own opinions on where they prefer to live and back these up with sensible and valid geographical information relevant to the two localities being studied. Pupils draw simple maps and construct simple maps using grid references.
103. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand the impact of traffic and pollution on communities. They contribute to discussions on changes within the school community as plans are produced to extend the school. They read local and world maps with understanding and use them to locate towns, cities and geographical features such as mountain ranges and rivers. They understand the difference between counties, countries and continents. They are aware of the different characteristics of villages, towns and farming hamlets. Their knowledge of distant parts of the world, such as India, is developing appropriately.
104. Teaching and learning are good at both key stages whilst geography is being taught, but there are periods of time when it is dropped from the curriculum to make room for other foundation subjects. During these gaps in provision, some knowledge and skill is inevitably lost and teachers have to spend time consolidating skills and knowledge already mastered. There is evidence of good teaching at Key Stage 2, although no lessons were observed. Teachers' planning contains clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils so that they fully understand what is expected of

them. Teachers use questioning and discussion effectively to introduce activities. They build on pupils' previous learning and make good use of the local environment. Teachers and other support staff work effectively together to support pupils' learning, particularly those who have special educational needs, and ensure that they understand how to complete their work. Pupils are interested in their work and respond well to suggestions as to how they can improve. Pupils' good behaviour and their consideration for one another creates a good working environment and has a positive impact on their learning.

105. Management of the subject has improved since the last inspection. The scheme of work, based on national guidelines, now shows satisfactory coverage of and progression through the programmes of study. Assessment is still in need of development because it lacks detail about what skills pupils have gained as they move through the school.

## **HISTORY**

106. No teaching of history was observed during the inspection, as there was none on the timetable. Judgements about standards are based on the examination of a small amount of pupils' work, and on the scrutiny of teachers' planning. No judgement can be made about teaching, nor about pupils' attitudes.
107. Standards in history are in line with national expectations by the age of seven and by the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine. They are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The seven year olds learn about Florence Nightingale. They learn to sequence some of the events in her life and can recount episodes from her life. This helps them develop a sense of chronology and learn about aspects of the past. They come to recognise why people did things, why certain events happened and what happened as a result. They identify different ways in which the past is represented and use a range of sources to find out about the past, for example, using a video tape to learn about Florence Nightingale's family, her early life and work
108. The oldest pupils learn about the ancient Greeks. They build on their learning about the way of life of people from different cultures who lived in the distant past and extend their skills in using a range of sources of information, such as books and artefacts. They learn to place the ancient Greek civilisation accurately on a time line and demonstrate an understanding of the terms BC and AD. They describe some of the important features of life in ancient Greece and compare life in different city-states. They learn about some of the beliefs of the ancient Greeks and why they held them. They understand the reasons for some key events, such as the success of the ancient Greeks against the Persian army at the battle of Marathon.
109. History is managed efficiently by the subject coordinator and resources for learning are adequate and used well.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

110. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national expectations at the age of nine and in line with expectations at the age of seven. What was taught did not sufficiently match the requirements of the National Curriculum. Seven-year-olds possessed only basic skills for using the keyboard and mouse to operate simple programs and write. In classes for older pupils, evidence of progress beyond this point was limited. There has been good improvement. Currently, standards are in line with what is expected by the ages of both seven and nine. Nearly all pupils use the mouse accurately to click on areas of the screen. They control a range of programs to draft and write, to save data and to support their work in other subjects. They control the movement of objects and 'pencils' on the screen by keying in information. They import information from one

program to another. They use paint programs well, changing colours and the width of lines. They are learning to email messages across the world. In some aspects of the subject, standards amongst older pupils are slightly above what is expected. They know how to save and retrieve their own work and access information using CD-ROM and the Internet. They combine text and graphics well to write and illustrate their own poems and use word processing programs competently to write letters, for example, letters of thanks to visitors and helpers. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved, and make progress at similar rates to other pupils. Although pupils use LOGO to control the movement of an on-screen cursor, skills are not progressing steadily, because of the difficulties that older pupils have in gaining access to equipment. They cannot use the computers in the main school building easily and in their 'temporary' classroom there is only one computer to meet the needs of 31 pupils.

111. Pupils enjoy the subject and their behaviour in lessons is nearly always good. They co-operate well when sharing a computer, tackling tasks as genuine partners. They display very good relationships by offering suggestions and taking turns. These good attitudes contribute strongly to the quality of learning as they share their knowledge and help each other. Pupils treat the computers with care, using them sensibly and looking after them well.
112. Generally, teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. Teachers often show pupils how to use programs by instructing the whole class. They plan and prepare for this well and have good subject knowledge that ensures that they have the knowledge and confidence to interest and extend their pupils. A lesson to pupils in Years 3 and 4, which took place in the mobile classroom, illustrates these strengths. The teacher gathered all the pupils into a position where they could see, and demonstrated how to use a program. Not all pupils were then able to practise the required skills for themselves, because there was only one computer for the entire class. The pupils watched three of their friends operating the computer, but some became bored waiting for their turn and most had no chance to try the program for themselves.
113. Management and coordination of information technology are good. The subject coordinator has very good knowledge of what is required to teach the subject effectively, and is able to offer good leadership and advice. There is good capacity for further improvement in information technology in future.

## MUSIC

114. At the time of the last inspection in 1996, standards by the age of seven and nine were high. These good standards have been maintained, with the quality of singing being particularly good across the school. Pupils show satisfactory abilities to appraise and listen to music, much of this work being done well in assemblies, which often begin and end with classical music being played. Pupils in Key Stage 2 were able to identify many of the instruments being played in a recording of music by Bach, and appreciated some of the musical effects created in Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony.
115. Performing music makes an important contribution to the experiences that the school provides for its pupils. They play to each other in lessons and perform for their parents. Involvement of pupils with special educational needs is a feature of music at the school. These pupils have full equality of access to the curriculum and often achieve similar results to their peers, especially in singing. Singing is an area of strength all through the school and almost all pupils sing tunefully, with a good sense of rhythm. Their diction is clear and they begin and end musical phrases together. Some pupils are learning the recorder in recorder clubs and they have opportunities to play accompaniments to singing in assemblies. They do this well for their age, one girl playing an

excellent duet with her music teacher that brought both awe and admiration from the assembled school.

116. Good work was observed on the singing of raps, followed up with work on composing of rap songs devised by the pupils in small groups. They rehearsed their own versions and then composed simple musical accompaniments to them, using a wide choice of percussion instruments. Some of the resulting work was of a high standard.
117. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good. They enjoy singing and playing instruments. In lessons, there is no shortage of volunteers to show others what they have been working on and practising. Pupils are sensitive in the comments that they make about each other's work, listening and appraising in ways that offer encouragement and advice. They collaborate well in making up their own compositions.
118. Teaching in all the music lessons seen was very good. In all cases, the teacher's knowledge of the subject was more than sufficient to meet the needs of pupils. Management of pupils is very good, so that little loss of time occurs, which in turn maximises what is available for learning. A minor weakness is that pupils with particular instrumental knowledge did not make use of their additional skills in lessons. Nevertheless, the teacher's very good relationships with the pupils, her own expertise and the way she plans lessons to be varied and interesting, lead to good levels of motivation and good learning.
119. The leadership and coordination of music are good. The subject coordinator uses her specific knowledge and skills as an accompanist to enhance the quality of singing, especially amongst the older pupils. She takes all the music lessons in the school and this makes the most effective use possible of her expertise.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

120. Only one swimming lesson was observed during the inspection, and no other aspect of physical education was seen, although the examination of teachers' planning shows that the full physical education curriculum is covered. The youngest children make a good start on learning to swim, using the school's own shallow water pool in the second half of the summer term each year. The good teaching they receive is very helpful in giving them confidence in the water and promoting their enjoyment. Older pupils also have swimming lessons at another school. Because of the good start they make, pupils' achievements in swimming far exceed national expectations by the time they transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, and many eight and nine year olds are able to swim at least 25 metres, which is the expectation for pupils by the age of 11

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

121. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the local education authority's agreed syllabus, as they did at the time of the last inspection, at the age of seven, and when pupils transfer to middle school at the age of nine.
122. The teaching is good and this enables pupils to make good progress in their learning, building well on the little most know about religion when they first come to school, and helping them to reach satisfactory standards in their knowledge and understanding. The youngest children learn, for example, about celebrations. They are helped to understand the idea of personal celebrations, for instance, as they talk about and plan a party in school to celebrate pupils' achievements throughout

the year. The good teaching is characterised by good relationships with the children, which means that they behave well and listen carefully and so make good progress in their learning. They are well involved in discussion and this helps hold their attention well and aids concentration. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject is good and this enables her to explain things clearly and ask appropriate questions to check for understanding and make pupils think.

123. The seven year olds learn to understand, for example, that not all language has a literal meaning and that some language is figurative. Very good use is made of common sayings such as, "You got out of bed the wrong side" and, "Pull your socks up" to explain figurative language. The teacher has high expectations of pupils achievements and learning to understand this provides a good level of challenge for these pupils. Once the point is made, good links are made with figurative language used in the Bible, for example, in the New Testament where Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd." Bible stories are told very well, capturing pupils' attention very well and ensuring good concentration and behaviour.
124. The oldest pupils learn, for example, about how a place of worship is used by a faith community, and some of the things a faith community does there. They know some of the main reasons why people go to church, for example, to pray, to give thanks, and for a baptism or wedding. Lessons are very well planned and prepared, clearly building on the long-term planning for the term and the syllabus being followed. Clear objectives for lessons are spelled out in planning and this enables the teacher to focus closely on what it is pupils should learn. Pupils are controlled well and relationships are good. This means that pupils listen and behave well and pay close attention and this promotes good learning. A little unsatisfactory behaviour by a few boys is swiftly dealt with, and is not allowed to develop and disrupt learning. There are high expectations of what pupils can understand, for example, the concept of 'The Church' as an institution, distinct from a building.
125. Religious education is well led and managed by a knowledgeable coordinator. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate and used well.