

INSPECTION REPORT

OVER COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Over

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110616

Headteacher: Miss C Greenaway

Reporting inspector: Helen Ranger
22223

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 June 2003

Inspection number: 247016

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 Years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Long Furlong Over Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	CB4 5PG
Telephone number:	01954 273332
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev M Raby
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22223	Helen Ranger	Registered inspector	Foundation stage Information and communication technology Educational inclusion	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9399	Roger Watts	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. The school's provision for pupils' personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13805	Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Geography	
14806	John Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Religious education	
4486	Michael Weller	Team inspector	English History English as an additional language Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Over Primary School is a community school for pupils aged four to eleven. It mainly serves the large village of Over and currently has 284 pupils. Pupils are admitted to the school at the beginning of the school year of their fifth birthday. Their attainment on entry covers a wide range but is generally above the level seen in most schools. Nine per cent of pupils have special educational needs, a lower than average figure. Most pupils come from white British backgrounds but three per cent come from families with a range of ethnic minority origins. Six per cent have English as an additional language, although few are at the early stages of learning English

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is now an improving school that provides its pupils with a sound education. Pupils mainly make satisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on admission. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features. It is good for the youngest children. The new headteacher provides very good leadership. The overall management of the school by the staff and governors is currently sound and developing rapidly. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of how the school can be developed and has made a rapid start in working with staff and governors to achieve this.
- Standards are well above average in speaking, listening and reading and above average in music and history.
- Children are given a good start to school in the Reception classes.
- Pupils of all ages have very good attitudes to work, form very positive relationships, behave very well and are supported well by the arrangements for their social and moral development.
- Pupils with special educational needs are catered for well.
- The governors give increasingly valuable support in managing the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) that are well below average at the top of the school.
- The progress made by the most capable pupils, especially in science and writing.
- How the curriculum is planned to cater for the full range of ages and attainments in each class.
- How teachers assess pupils' progress and use this information to plan their lessons.
- How management responsibilities are carried out, especially those of monitoring standards, teaching and the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Since then, performance in English and mathematics as measured by the national tests of the oldest pupils has been generally high. The school continues to show the strengths that were praised in the previous report in aspects such as pupils' personal development and how this is promoted. The teaching seen during this inspection was better and action on this key area for improvement has been satisfactory. However, action on most of the remaining key issues from that time was not undertaken with enough urgency or rigour until this year and its impact has been too limited. The new headteacher is ensuring that rapid improvements are now taking place but weaknesses remain in pupils' standards in ICT, in how the school caters for higher attainers, how curricular planning ensures progression in pupils' skills, and in how pupils' progress is monitored.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	B	A	C
Mathematics	B	B	A	A
Science	C	C	B	C

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

Pupils in Year 6 have sustained high standards in English and mathematics compared with national averages but performance has not been as strong in science. Over the past five years, performance has been steady but has not reflected national improvements. The school's targets for this age group have not always been met in recent years. Future targets have been based on recent assessments of pupils and are suitably challenging. In Year 2, pupils' results in the national tests have also been high in English but lower in mathematics and science, although this year's unconfirmed results indicate some improvement.

Inspection findings are that pupils from all backgrounds generally make satisfactory progress across the school, although science standards should be higher. The most capable pupils could do better at times in many subjects. The youngest pupils do well in the Reception classes. They are on course to exceed the levels expected nationally by the end of the year in almost all areas of learning and are especially advanced in their personal, social and emotional development. Their creative development is not as strong as other aspects of their work. By Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is well above average in speaking, listening and reading and above average in writing, history and music. It is average in most other subjects. The exception is in ICT where, while standards are average by Year 2, they are well below average by Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons, in the playground and around the school. Pupils are polite and show respect and care for others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils show maturity and are capable of taking initiative, although not enough opportunities are given to do so.
Attendance	Very good. Rates are well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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 and learning are good for the Reception classes and are sound with good features for pupils in Years 1 to 6. There have been recent improvements to the overall quality of teaching. The teaching of the youngest children effectively introduces them to the routines of the school and to interesting and varied activities. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory in English and mathematics and in the key skills of literacy and numeracy, although the teaching of writing is not developed as well as other aspects of English. Teaching is improving in ICT but classroom computers remain underused. Teachers generally cater for the lower and average attainers in each class, including pupils with special learning needs, but higher attainers need more challenge in some lessons. There are too many variations in the quality of planning, teaching and learning between parallel classes. Inconsistencies in the way long-term curricular plans are interpreted day-to-day by different teachers are not supporting a smooth progression in the pupils' acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills in some subjects. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and create a pleasant atmosphere for learning. The way that assessment is used to inform teachers' planning is weak and is having a negative impact on pupils' overall progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for the Foundation Stage ¹ and satisfactory for Years 1 to 6. The school needs to review how it plans some subjects. Planning does not always cater for the mixed-age classes and ensure that pupils' skills are developed progressively or consistently well between parallel classes.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good and improving further. Pupils' needs are identified effectively. They are supported well by teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Most of these pupils are bilingual and take a full part in all activities. The few who are at earlier stages of learning English are catered for well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is very good provision for promoting pupils' moral development, good social provision and satisfactory spiritual and cultural provision. However, the school does not offer many opportunities for pupils to learn about the diversity of modern British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring and harmonious community. There are satisfactory arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety, although some procedures need to be formalised and agreed by the staff as a whole. Pupils' academic progress is not assessed well enough for teachers to plan lessons efficiently and this is an area for improvement.

There is an effective partnership with parents. The school welcomes parents' contribution and receives good support from most of them.

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children are admitted to a school that has a nursery at the age of three or four. The last year of this stage is usually described as the Reception year.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides very good vision, energy and strong leadership. The management roles of senior staff are not developed well but are being reviewed at present.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are supportive and skilled. They are increasingly well-informed and now work closely with the school in its management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is now making rapid progress in its analysis of how well it is doing and staff have worked hard to improve areas of weakness. The written improvement plans summarise initiatives well. Teachers do not yet monitor standards, teaching or the curriculum sufficiently.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The headteacher and governors now have clear plans of how the school will develop but these are yet to have a full impact on standards and provision. The budget is now linked well to planning and 'best value' considered soundly but some financial procedures need to be agreed and formalised.

There are sufficient staff and learning resources to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory but some classrooms are small and there is no spare space for amenities such as a library or adequate office space.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is led and managed well. • Behaviour is good. • The school expects children to work hard. • Staff are approachable. • Their children like school. • The teaching is good and promotes good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of information about children's progress. • Amounts of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons. • How closely the school works with parents.

The parents of 50 per cent of pupils responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and 29 parents attended the meeting with inspectors. Most parents hold positive views of the school. The inspection agrees with the areas above that please the parents most. Inspectors consider that the school works increasingly closely with parents and provides good information. The range of extra activities for pupils is good. Homework is considered by inspectors to be inconsistent between classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

i) Standards in the Foundation Stage (the Reception classes)

1. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are above average. They are admitted in the September of the year in which they are five. They achieve well as a result of effective teaching. They are on course to exceed the levels expected by the Early Learning Goals² in almost all areas of learning by the end of the school year. Their attainment is well above average in their personal, social and emotional development. It is average in creative development, lower than the other areas of learning because children do not have enough opportunities to show independence and individual creativity.

ii) Standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6

2. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 in 2002, the school's results were high compared with national averages in reading and writing and were average in mathematics. Compared with schools with similar intakes, results were above average in reading and writing but well below average in mathematics. The mathematics results were not as strong mainly because fewer pupils reached Level 3³ in the tests than in English. Results for this age group have been above or well above average in English for the past few years. Teachers' assessments of attainment in science in 2002 showed that an average proportion of pupils achieved at least the expected Level 2 but a lower than average proportion reached Level 3.
3. Inspection findings are that, in the three 'core' subjects, the pupils currently in Year 2 attain above average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. Within English, their attainment is well above average in speaking, listening and reading and above average in writing. Pupils' attainment in the key skills of literacy and numeracy is good and supports their progress across the entire curriculum. Compared with the judgements of the last inspection, standards are higher in English and mathematics while science attainment remains average.
4. In the 2002 tests in Year 6, pupils' performance was well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. In mathematics, it was well above the average for similar schools, and in English and science it was in line with similar schools. Compared with their prior attainment at the age of seven, pupils did very well in English and mathematics and satisfactorily in science. The school has sustained above average or well above average performance in this age group in English and mathematics over the past few years, but science performance has been more variable. It has not succeeded in improving its overall performance in tests at the rate seen in schools nationally, although the inspection team acknowledges that its starting point for such comparisons was much higher than in most schools. The school's targets for pupils' attainment in tests are currently challenging and rigorous, supporting well the drive to raise standards further. Last year the target in mathematics was met but the English target was not achieved.
5. Inspection findings are that the pupils now in Year 6 attain above average standards in English, and mathematics and average standards in science. The school has maintained the standards identified by the previous inspection in English and mathematics but standards are lower now in

² The Early Learning Goals are the levels in all the areas of learning that children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class. The areas of learning are the Government guidelines for the curriculum for children in Nursery and Reception classes.

³ The nationally expected level for pupils to reach by the end of Year 2 is Level 2 and by Year 6 is Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 by Year 2 or Level 5 by Year 6, then he or she is reaching standards above those expected for a child of his or her age.

science. Within English, in this age group also, speaking, listening and reading are stronger than writing. The main reason that science standards are lower is that, as with the younger age groups, too few pupils attain the higher than expected Level 5 in the national tests and in their class work. Again in this age group, good standards of literacy and numeracy equip the pupils well in the rest of the curriculum. Pupils' very good standards of speaking and listening are also a factor in their high attainment.

6. In these subjects, the achievements of pupils from all backgrounds are satisfactory, compared with their attainment when they started school. However, there remains some underachievement and this is most evident in science. Pupils have the capability to do better than they have done in recent years in science, for example as reflected in the teachers' assessments of their attainment in Year 2 and in the national tests for Year 6. This has now been recognised by the school and appropriate moves to improve attainment have been established, although they are yet to have an impact on overall standards. There is no obvious reason why pupils' writing standards should not be as high as their reading standards. This has also been identified by the school as a priority for action.
7. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs in all age groups is satisfactory. This group of pupils is supported well and makes good progress when the pupils are working directly with a learning support assistant or working towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. The most capable pupils could do better at times if work was more challenging for them. This was a weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection that has not been fully remedied. There are a small number of bilingual pupils in the school and their achievements are in line with their peers. The small number who need help learning to speak and understand English receive this and are making very good progress. Any particular language needs are identified and supported well by teachers.

Standards in other subjects

8. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is average in art and design, design and technology, geography, physical education and religious education. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment and from all ethnic backgrounds make satisfactory progress. Standards in history are above average by Year 2 and Year 6; pupils have a wide knowledge and good recall of the work they have covered. Standards in music are above average by both Year 2 and Year 6; pupils do particularly well in singing and standards in class lessons are supplemented well by the good knowledge of those who learn one of the wide range of instruments offered in separate tuition sessions.
9. A key area for improvement from the last inspection was in ICT where pupils were judged to be underachieving. There have been satisfactory improvements by Year 2 where standards are now average and where recent initiatives have had the quickest effect. However, the low attainment of the older pupils was not tackled by the school with sufficient urgency or rigour. The new headteacher has injected fresh energy into this area with some recent success. Nevertheless, these efforts have been too recent to have any substantial impact on the attainment of the older pupils, so that by Year 6 their attainment is well below average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The school has maintained the strengths in this aspect of its work that were identified in the previous report. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Although a few parents say that their child does not enjoy school, all the pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they did and this is borne out by their evident eagerness to start school in the morning. Very few are late and they go quickly to their classrooms and get on with whatever activity has been set without fuss.
11. The children in the Reception classes are keen to experience all the activities offered and concentrate very well for their age. In the rest of the school, attitudes to learning are very dependent on the teacher's skill in motivating and challenging. In a good example in a music lesson in a Year 3/4 class, pupils were very keen to participate in the singing and in the analysis

of recorded music. Their comments were perceptive and they fed off each other's ideas. In these strong lessons, when the teacher asks a question, the usual response is a forest of hands. After a lesson introduction that stimulates ideas, they move quickly to start their individual or group work because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They persist with the tasks set and move on to extra work without the need to be reminded. They are pleased with the work they have done and are keen to share that pleasure. In some lessons, however, the teaching does not inspire pupils and their response is muted, even though it is clear from talking to them that they should have much to contribute. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are very positive and they are given good encouragement to share their ideas and to contribute to lessons. Other pupils are very supportive towards them. This also applies to the small number of pupils with English as an additional language who are welcomed and supported by other pupils and adults.

12. Pupils are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom. They are keen to help the teacher or other staff. They enjoy the extra-curricular activities offered and a very high proportion take part, for example, in individual music tuition.
13. The behaviour of pupils is very good. In most lessons only a quiet word is occasionally necessary to keep pupils' attention. Teachers can concentrate on their teaching and this has a very positive impact on the good rate of learning seen in some lessons. Even when the teaching is uninspiring, pupils rarely misbehave. They also behave very well as they move around the school. Pupils behave well in the dining hall, although the social atmosphere in the hall is inhibited by the poor acoustics, which make conversation very difficult. There were no exclusions from the school last year. Pupils treat the things they work with and the property of others with great care.
14. The personal development of pupils and the relationships within the school are very good. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities offered and, on many occasions, volunteer to clear up or help around the school. They often identify unprompted what needs to be done; for example Year 4 pupils offered to start a board games club for younger pupils and Year 6 make it their business to watch out for smaller children who have no-one to play with, or need help and supervision in wet play times. In most classes there is a strong rapport between adults and pupils that allows a productive interaction which benefits learning. However, in a few cases, the lack of stimulation from the teacher leads to only satisfactory relationships as the pupils recognise that they could do better, given the opportunity. Overall, relationships between pupils are very good. A few parents and a few pupils complained about low-level bullying, although none was seen and pupils said that any oppressive behaviour was dealt with very effectively by staff. In the playground, pupils of all ages play well together and older ones respect the needs of younger pupils.
15. Within lessons, pupils often work well to support each other and discuss problems. However, in some lessons, pupils are given too few opportunities to work as a team towards a common purpose or to take initiative to use skills in more imaginative or independent ways. They recognise that, although theirs is largely a mono-cultural school, many children in Britain have different ways of life and beliefs. They think that they would be tolerant of these but have not yet begun to consider the implications of that tolerance, partly because they have so little contact with other views. No incidents of racism were observed during the inspection and pupils said that there were none.
16. The overall attendance last year was well above with the national average for primary schools and there was little unauthorised absence. This has continued this year. Punctuality is very good. Very good attendance has a positive effect on the learning in school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good for children in the Reception class and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. There have been some recent improvements as the initiatives started by the new headteacher have been implemented. While these often are yet to have an overall impact on pupils' long-term progress, they have led to better lessons in the short term. The lessons seen were better in quality than at the time of the last inspection. The unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated

and better teaching has been maintained at a similar level. During this inspection, two Year 5/6 teachers were absent and their places were taken by experienced temporary staff. It was not possible for the inspectors to judge directly the quality of lessons for most pupils in this Year 5/6 age group with their regular teachers.

18. Evidence about the overall quality of teaching was gained from lessons, from an examination of pupils' previous work and from talking to pupils and teachers about their work. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Almost half were judged good and a further tenth very good. There were two excellent lessons. The temporary staff contributed very well and taught several of the high quality lessons.
19. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage (the Reception classes) and children establish good learning habits. The staff work well as a team and plan lessons well, based on efficient assessment of the children's progress. Children are given a good balance between lessons in which they work alongside adults and those which enable them to choose their own activities. Occasionally the lessons do not fully stretch the most capable children and some sessions would benefit from additional adult support.
20. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 in almost all subjects. The exceptions are history and music which are taught well and enable pupils to achieve higher than average standards. Lessons in English and mathematics and the key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. They have a high priority in the timetable. Pupils are grouped broadly in attainment sets for English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. While this makes teachers' planning more straightforward in some respects, it means that pupils have to move between classrooms and teachers regularly. Coupled with the arrangements for some other subjects to be taught by just one teacher in a unit of three classes, pupils can be working with quite a large range of teachers and other pupils each day. The school is rightly reviewing the impact of these methods on pupils and their learning. The teaching of writing has correctly been identified by the school for further improvement and pupils currently have too few opportunities to write at length and to produce work of high quality.
21. There have been recent improvements to the teaching of ICT with the installation of the new computer suite. This has already led to better progress in lessons. However, over time, the teaching and learning of the older pupils in this subject has been poor. Too few opportunities have been given for pupils systematically to acquire the expected range of knowledge, understanding and skills. While the use of the suite is improving this, classroom computers remain underused.
22. Teachers work in four teams, each catering for a particular age group. In the best examples seen, this enables them to plan together and to share their expertise and workload. In practice, the success of the system remains very variable. At times, during the inspection, lessons that were planned by the unit team were delivered very differently by different teachers. This is also apparent from the scrutiny of the work of pupils in the parallel classes who achieve more successfully in some classes than in others. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is mainly satisfactory but amounts and quality vary between classes.
23. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure for individual lessons and, to this extent, shows improvement on the key issue from the previous inspection. However, it is not always obvious that teachers are aware of how their plans link to the overall programmes of work for each subject. In this respect, practice varies between parallel classes with teachers interpreting the school's long-term planning in different ways. This weakness in curricular planning is having an impact on the success of individual lessons in the longterm and is leading to unevenness in the learning of different classes. The particular expertise of some teachers and visiting tutors is being used very effectively. This was evident especially in some lessons in English, ICT and music during the inspection and in the previous work of some classes in art and design.
24. Teachers' day-to-day planning is satisfactory. Lessons have clear overall objectives and this aspect has improved since the last inspection. There are good links between subjects that make work relevant for pupils. Teachers' plans often identify the different support and tasks that will be

given to lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs. It is not always clear, however, what the higher attainers will be expected to achieve that is different from the rest of the class and there is too little planning for the specific needs of this group in some lessons. This is having a particular effect in science where too few pupils are working at higher than average levels. A few of the lessons in a range of subjects lacked pace and challenge. As a result, pupils became bored and inattentive and did not achieve as well as they could. There has been an improvement in the way that the practical and investigative aspects of lessons are taught. The new headteacher identified this as a priority for improvement, especially in science. Teachers have adapted their planning to cater more effectively for this, although practice continues to vary too much between classes and the oldest pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently or to use their initiative.

25. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and good relationships prevail. Lessons are conducted in a pleasant and orderly atmosphere. Teachers are calm and patient with pupils. They show care and attention to their personal needs. Teachers explain tasks clearly so that pupils understand what to do. They use questioning well to establish what pupils have learned and to extend their thinking. Time and resources are generally used well, although there is an over-reliance on routine worksheets in some classes. A few of the weaker lessons showed a lack of pace. Support staff are deployed well in most lessons, although they are occasionally underemployed in the introductions to literacy and numeracy lessons. These staff give good support, particularly to lower attaining pupils.
26. Teaching and learning are good for pupils with special educational needs when they are supported by the teacher or learning support assistant in small groups, and when work is planned appropriate to their needs. There are also good examples of pupils being able to contribute well to whole class sessions through the teacher's skilful, inclusive questioning, or by being given opportunities to present their work to the rest of the class. These pupils also benefit from additional support for reading and spelling beyond the Literacy Hour. In some whole class situations, however, pupils with special needs are not always given sufficient time and opportunity to complete longer writing tasks. Pupils at the early stages of learning English benefit from support in small groups. They also receive regular weekly specialist support from a visiting teacher.
27. There are weaknesses in the way teachers assess pupils' achievements that are having an impact on long-term progress. Practice varies considerably between classes. This is an area that the school has rightly identified for urgent development. In general, teachers give sound oral feedback to pupils as the lessons progress. There are some very good examples of how teachers mark pupils' work, such as useful written comments and indications of how well a task has been achieved. Too often, work is not marked or comments are too cursory to be useful to the pupil. Teachers are beginning to use personal learning targets with pupils but the success of this varies and a consistent approach is yet to be established. The procedures for the long-term assessment of progress are not well established in many subjects and thus are not feeding into more rigorous practice in day-to-day lessons.

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

28. The curriculum is generally satisfactory and of similar quality to the time of the previous inspection. Although the subjects of the National Curriculum are broadly covered, the planning and teaching of ICT is undeveloped and has suffered from a lack of attention in the past. This has been identified as an area for improvement by the school and moves have recently been taken to develop provision. The school has also identified a need for more consistency of learning experiences for pupils in art, design technology and physical education. The adoption of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy has led to appropriate planning and the use of time for English and mathematics, but time is limited for some other subjects.

29. The curriculum is good for the Foundation Stage. The teachers in the Reception classes plan activities well, in line with national guidance for all areas of learning. They have effective systems to ensure that all their key objectives are covered in practice. The exception to this good planning is in how outdoor play is currently arranged. This is an area that is being improved. As the outdoor resources for this age group improve in quality, the staff have identified well how they intend to use them.
30. In Years 1 to 6, because of mixed-age classes, most subjects are planned as part of a two-year cycle. Subject content and knowledge are adequately covered in this way, but the skills and understanding specific to particular foundation subjects are not always clearly identified, and planning for the progressive development of skills is inconsistent. To this extent, a key issue from the previous inspection of securing better progression in learning has not been fully addressed. Teachers generally plan effectively for different age groups within a class, but not as effectively for differing levels of attainment. Pupils are 'set' broadly by attainment for English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. It is too soon to judge the full impact of these changes in organisation.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are quickly identified and met, generally with successful results. The school meets the national code of practice for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans identify appropriate targets and pupils receive effective support to help them achieve, mainly in class, but sometimes through small group or individual support. Where pupils have a statement of special educational need, statutory provision is met effectively through close links with outside agencies and good liaison with parents.
32. Provision for literacy is satisfactory. Pupils with identified needs receive good additional support with reading and spelling. However there is no consistent application of a handwriting policy across the school. There are also insufficient opportunities for extended writing both within literacy hour sessions and in other subjects. Provision for numeracy is satisfactory and the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy are applied soundly across the school.
33. The school provides significant curriculum enrichment. A number of visiting groups enliven the curriculum. For example, a touring history education group has organised a 'Castle Day' and a 'Tudor Day' where pupils have participated in role-play. Each term the regular curriculum is suspended for a week and visiting 'experts' help focus on a particular area, such as a science week or art week. There are clubs for French and Spanish. Many pupils take advantage of the wide range of musical tuition that is offered. School visits also enhance pupils' learning. They cover a wide range of topics and all age groups. Recent visits have included a wildlife centre, coastal resort and HMS Belfast. In addition, a wide and increasing range of clubs and activities is provided at lunchtimes and after school. These include arts and crafts, book fairs, music and drama productions, recorder clubs, choir, country dancing and sport. There are opportunities to participate in local sporting competitions such as 'Kwik cricket', netball and football tournaments.
34. Equality of access and opportunity is satisfactory. All pupils have access to the National Curriculum and the school prides itself on being inclusive. The school is sensitive to the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and these pupils are given good support.
35. Planned provision for gifted and talented pupils is at an early stage. While the needs of these pupils are generally met on a day-to-day basis in the classroom, there are no arrangements to meet the particular needs of individual pupils who show an unusual level of ability. The headteacher has recognised this as an area that the school needs to develop and has appointed a designated co-ordinator for this area. Appropriate plans are in place to improve this aspect of provision.
36. Provision for personal education is improving and plans are good. The school is building a coherent programme for personal, health, social and citizenship education. It is also participating in the national Healthy Schools initiative which includes appropriate sex education and drugs education. The aspects of this provision that were seen during the inspection were of good quality.

37. There are developing links with the local community. Ministers from the local churches take regular assemblies. A national telecom company has made a presentation to the whole school and run communications workshops with Years 5 and 6. Fundraising has been targeted to support East Anglian Children's Hospices. Coaching has been provided by a local hockey club and Cambridge United football club. There is good liaison with local pre-school groups and with secondary schools to ease the transition of pupils. Curricular links are developing with local village colleges. The school has linked to one as part of a national sports co-ordinator initiative, while another runs a mathematics summer school providing 'catch-up' classes and extension classes. The school forms part of a cluster group with other local primary schools for joint meetings to share subject and special needs practice.
38. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. As at the time of the previous inspection, moral and social provision are strengths of the school. Spiritual and cultural provision are satisfactory. The school has not developed sufficient awareness of diversity in modern Britain and this is still a weakness.
39. Pupils are asked to reflect on the theme for the day in school assemblies, which sometimes provokes thoughts about their own feelings and promotes spiritual awareness. The acts of collective worship are satisfactory. At other times, however, opportunities are missed to motivate pupils to relate the meaning and relevance of what they have heard to their own place in the greater scheme of things. Some religious education lessons help pupils to relate their own feelings to those of religions, for example, linking the eightfold path of Buddhism to pupils' own thoughts on how to lead a good life. Others are too factual and do not emphasise the search of mankind for a meaning to life outside the material world. Pupils are occasionally delighted by discovery but, too often, opportunities are missed to allow them to explore the wonders of the world they live in. In particular, some lessons for older pupils do not lift pupils' spirits or encourage them to engage in discussion which would develop opinions and personal conviction.
40. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff provide good role models and are respected by pupils. The consistently applied behaviour policy encourages pupils not only to behave well for reward or to avoid sanctions, but also to value hard work and good behaviour as a virtue. They understand what is right and wrong. Because they discuss the rationale behind rules, there is a good level of self-discipline, which increases as pupils grow. Older pupils, however, do not have sufficient opportunity to extend such discussion, which would start to develop the moral judgement appropriate to their undoubted maturity. Pupils are taught to respect the values and beliefs of others, although, because the make-up of the school is largely mono-cultural, that tolerance is rarely put to a meaningful test. Nevertheless, the school successfully integrates the very small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. A very small number of pupils and parents have concerns about low-level bullying, but the school operates an effective anti-bullying policy which pupils believe resolves the small number of occurrences.
41. The school provides well for pupils' social development. Assemblies are used to foster a commitment to the school community among pupils. They teach them the value of being a useful member of that community and, by extension, of society as a whole. Pupils are encouraged to undertake responsibilities, from taking registers to the office to older pupils helping younger ones at play times. A school council has recently been established and pupil representatives play an enthusiastic part, although they are not yet fully running it. The wide range of clubs promotes social interaction. In many lessons, pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, for example, in a physical education when groups had to work together to solve problems, while other evaluated their efforts. However, pupils have insufficient opportunity to work on their own initiative in lessons such as in science and design and technology, although the school has started to change teaching methods to encourage this. The school's personal, social and health education policy covers appropriate ground for introducing pupils to the dangers and personal responsibilities they will meet but this is not yet fully embedded in the curriculum. There are currently no opportunities for pupils to experience a period away from home with their classmates on a residential trip.
42. Pupils gain awareness of their own culture through lessons in subjects like English, history, geography, art and music. History is brought alive by pupils taking part in re-enactments of earlier

times, such as the Tudor period, and this strengthens pupils' understanding of their cultural roots. Classical music is played in assemblies, and sometimes staff talk to pupils about how it makes them feel. European painting is studied in art and design lessons. However, opportunities are lost to broaden pupils' knowledge by making more use of local theatres and art galleries that abound in the Cambridge area. Earlier this year the school was visited by a group of Muslim children from another school who talked about their life and what their faith meant to them. This had a profound impact on older pupils. However, although other religions are studied in religious education and aspects of other cultures through geography, pupils are not often brought into close contact with other cultures found within modern Britain. There are few displays of, for example, art, musical instruments, food or dress from other cultures around the school and few fiction books in the classrooms of stories from Africa, the Caribbean or South

Asia. There are few visits to places where pupils can experience such cultures or visitors to school to talk about them. This awareness of the cultures of other groups is still insufficiently developed, as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. Although the school is a caring and harmonious community, procedures for ensuring that its pupils are cared for are only satisfactory because there is lack of rigour in some systems. In this respect, the judgements of this inspection are not as positive as those in the previous report.
44. Sufficient staff are trained in first aid and, if pupils are ill or have accidents at school, they are well looked after. However, arrangements for the training of lunch supervisors are mainly informal and narrow in scope. Regular health and safety risk assessments and equipment checks are carried out, and the school is a safe environment, but the results are not recorded in a way that ensures that all proposed action is completed. Risk assessment for off-site activities has been started but the school does not yet conform to the most recent regulations in documenting these. Child protection procedures, which meet local guidelines, are in place and the designated teacher and some other staff have been trained in their use. However, the updating of training for the rest of staff is overdue. Recently, a good system has been introduced for staff to record minor concerns about pupils, which will allow the school to see any emerging patterns that need attention. In the few cases encountered, the school has received good support from welfare agencies.
45. Procedures for maintaining discipline are effective and consistently applied. Pupils know and respect the rules, and the rewards and sanctions used to implement them. They have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and formulate class rules with teacher guidance. The newly introduced pastoral file will allow staff to collate information on behaviour and other elements of personal development and to make use of it to improve this aspect of pupils' education. Registers are completed satisfactorily at the start of sessions. The school does not yet operate a system of contacting parents on the first day if pupils are absent without explanation; this is important when so many come to school on their own. Parents have to request holidays in term time and these are conscientiously recorded so that those in excess of ten days in a year are not authorised. Absences are normally explained by a written note from parents. In the very few cases where it is necessary, the education welfare service is involved appropriately.
46. The weaknesses in procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress were a key issue for improvement in the last report. They still largely remain unsatisfactory. Procedures are good in the Foundation Stage, for pupils with special educational needs and for those whose first language is not English. The staff in the Reception classes have adopted the recent national guidance on assessment and are building up profiles for each individual in all the areas of learning. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved since the appointment of the current headteacher. Needs are now more clearly and sharply identified. Class teachers compile the individual education plans with the help of the special needs co-ordinator. A major improvement appreciated by parents is that these plans are now shared with them. The plans include clear details of pupils' strengths, the nature of their difficulties, the involvement of

outside agencies, targets with criteria for success, teaching strategies and resources, and parents' and pupils' comments. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly, at least once a term. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is also checked regularly and care is taken to distinguish between additional language and other learning needs.

47. Assessment takes place in English and mathematics, with some target setting for individuals and groups, but it is not consistent enough. In science and the foundation subjects, the procedures are unsatisfactory. The new headteacher realises the inconsistencies and is addressing the need to adopt a more consistent approach across the school. This is a priority in the current school improvement plan.

48. The school uses optional national tests for English and mathematics, and non-verbal reasoning tests for pupils in Years 3 to 5. These are used to help the 'setting' arrangements in English and mathematics. Where assessment takes place, it guides planning. For example, a teacher may alter the daily or weekly plan if it is realised that pupils have not understood a topic properly. However, in some subjects, because procedures are inconsistent, assessment is not used enough to inform subsequent planning. Teachers are too often not aware of how pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills develop over time. The school is beginning to computerise its assessment systems. The systems are not yet used to track individual pupils' progress effectively but are starting to highlight priorities, for example, for whole year groups. Although this is an improvement, assessment needs developing and remains a key area for action.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents are generally well satisfied with what the school achieves. This aspect remains a strength, as it was at the time of the previous inspection, and it continues to improve. About half the parents returned the questionnaire and the views expressed there were generally positive. They were most satisfied with the leadership and management of the school and the behaviour of pupils. They felt that staff are approachable, teach well and have high expectations of pupils. Their children like school and are making good progress. There were some concerns about the information they receive, the amount of homework and the range of extra-curricular activities. About 30 parents attended the meeting before the inspection and they were also generally positive. They also had concerns about the inconsistency of homework and the quality of some of the annual written reports on their children. However, they said that communications had greatly improved in the current year. There were a few concerns about the narrow range of work done by some older pupils and occasional bullying.
50. Many of the positive views are confirmed by the inspection. Last year's pupil reports were found to have shortcomings but extra-curricular activities are considered by inspectors to be good. Inspectors confirm that homework lacks consistency.
51. The school has effective links with parents across the full range of the community. Information for parents has improved since the previous inspection, and particularly this year. Parents of children starting school are given a good introduction to what their child will be doing. Parents are kept well informed of what is happening in school with regular newsletters. Curricular information is given by each year group each term so that parents can give support from home. Pupils' annual reports give good information about what the pupil has achieved that year in English, mathematics and science and targets are set for the pupil to improve. The brief comments about the other subjects are generally satisfactory although, because some teachers omitted comments for two or three subjects entirely last year, these reports did not meet requirements. The comments on the pupil's personal development are good and pupils have space to add their own comments. The headteacher has issued recent guidance to staff on report writing which, if followed, will increase the information on test results each year and ensure that reports meet requirements. There are two formal occasions in the year when the parents can meet the teachers and there is a further opportunity to discuss the report; the vast majority of parents attend. Parents say that staff are approachable and accessible for informal contacts throughout the year. The parents of pupils with special educational needs share their children's individual education plans and are fully involved in annual reviews of statements. There is good liaison between the school and other agencies and, where necessary, parents are put in touch with appropriate services such as behaviour support, speech and language, the community paediatrician, and the child and family nurse.
52. Parents have a very good impact on the progress of their children at school and at home. Most parents support their child's learning by hearing them read at home and recording comments in their school diary, although this tails off for many as they get older. These diaries are used to record homework for older pupils and, while useful to keep parents informed, do not tend to be used as a dialogue between the school and parents. Most parents support homework when expected. The school has issued a Home School Agreement and this is now being revised, with parental consultation. There is a strong parent teacher association that raises very substantial

amounts for the school and organises social events. These help bring parents and the school together. Funds have been used to provide, for example, playground equipment and computers for the new suite. A good number of parents help within the school, for example, with hearing pupils read and in practical lessons. Some parents also use personal expertise to widen pupils' knowledge, for example during the science week or one-off visits such as a parent's experiences of India.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. In the short time since her appointment, the headteacher has succeeded in bringing a very clear vision to the school for how it can develop. She is energetic and has become respected by staff, governors, parents and pupils. Working effectively with the staff and governors, she has established many necessary initiatives for improvement and to raise standards. Weaknesses remain in how well the school monitors its performance and acts to improve but indications are that it is moving in the right direction to become more effective in the future. There have been difficulties caused by unexpected staff illness and absence that have set back the pace of some planned action but, overall, the school is well placed to move forward and to begin to see the benefits of its current hard work.
54. The strengths identified in the leadership and management of the school at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The ethos continues to be good and relationships are positive. There have been recent improvements in the extent to which governors are involved in determining priorities and in the quality of information available to them. Governors are able and active. They have a good committee structure and an increasing knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They fulfil most statutory requirements but need to formalise some financial and health and safety procedures. There is a core of knowledgeable and increasingly experienced governors who have assumed a more active role in the management of the school.
55. Many of the main responsibilities for managing the curriculum and major aspects of the school have been delegated to staff, although these have been affected by current staff absence. In practice, these roles are often not carried out effectively. The subject leaders, for example, have had little experience of monitoring standards, teaching and the curriculum in ways that will identify how standards can be raised. The headteacher has ensured that further training has been available for this role and the situation is improving, although the changes are recent and have not yet had an overall impact on pupils' standards. As a result, action on the key issue from the previous inspection concerned with improving the monitoring of pupils' progress has been too slow until now. The headteacher and governors have also initiated changes in the overall staffing structure, appointing a deputy headteacher for next term – a post that has not been held in the school for some years. They have rightly identified the need to review other senior staff roles in the school. The staff increasingly analyse how well the school is doing by measures such as pupils' results in tests but, again, this practice is not yet well established.
56. The written development plans are suitably wide ranging and reflect the school's current initiatives for improvement. They outline clear timescales, resource implications and the responsibilities of key personnel but the varying levels of urgency or importance of each initiative are unclear. Some of the criteria for how success may be judged are very precise and measurable but others are more vague and less helpful in establishing how successful action may have been.
57. The school's administrative systems are mainly satisfactory. Day-to-day administration is efficient and the office staff who are the first point of contact for parents and visitors are friendly and approachable. The levels of office staffing have been recently increased to enable the headteacher to relinquish some routine tasks. The use of new technology to support efficiency in administrative procedures is currently more limited than in many schools, but improving as staff receive further training. There has not been a recent financial audit and inspectors were unable to see a copy of the last audit report. Many financial procedures do not seem to be supported by appropriate written policies that have been agreed by the governors.

58. In spite of weaknesses in formal procedures, the current budget is allocated well to areas of priority. The amounts of money carried forward into the most recent completed financial year were substantial and well above the proportion recommended nationally. There were clear plans for how this money would be spent, including the development of the ICT suite and enhancements to levels of support staff. The headteacher and the governors give appropriate attention to securing best value in their spending decisions now by questioning what they do, by consulting widely on the school's continuing development and by beginning to compare the school's performance with others locally and nationally. Grants and specific funding, such as that for pupils with special educational needs, are properly allocated.
59. Educational inclusion is managed satisfactorily in most respects, although the needs of higher attainers should be considered more effectively. There is good leadership and management of special educational needs and support for pupils with English as an additional language. The co-ordinator is well supported by a specialist teacher from the local education authority's Inclusion Service. All teachers have received in-service training in the new national code of practice. The governor with responsibility for special needs is well-informed and visits the school regularly. The school has started to give more focused attention to the needs of higher attaining pupils and to gifted and talented pupils, although this work is at a fairly early stage. The school has given sufficient attention to establishing a successful policy to ensure racial equality and gives appropriate consideration to the needs of the disabled.
60. The school has made positive use of recent local and national initiatives for school improvement. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy and their linked 'booster' arrangements have benefited the school but have tended to take attention away from the wider curriculum. The school feels that the main barriers to its continuing improvement are the limitations imposed by current budget levels and the uncertainties about future funding.
61. The school has a team of experienced staff. There are satisfactory arrangements for staff induction and continuing training. The national arrangements for the performance management of teachers are now implemented well. Class sizes are about average and most have classroom assistants who give valuable support, particularly in the mornings for literacy and numeracy. In the Reception classes, however, some children are not helped as much as they might be because the time available from support staff is limited. Staff supporting pupils with special educational needs are effective. Teaching resources are at least adequate in all subjects and good in music, English and history. Children in the Reception class lack outdoor play equipment but this is planned to increase.
62. The accommodation is generally satisfactory. All teaching groups have their own classroom although some are rather small or of an impractical shape. There are several small rooms for withdrawing groups of pupils for additional support. The recently provided computer suite, though adequate, is somewhat small and poorly ventilated and there is no library area where pupils can sit and browse or study. The outside facilities are good, with extensive grounds and interesting play facilities. Administrative accommodation is limited to cater for the increased team of office staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. To build on the school's strengths, raise standards and improve the quality of provision further, the headteacher, staff and the governing body should act in the following areas:
- (1) Raise standards in ICT, as planned, by:
- continuing to implement the current action plan;
 - improving the use of computers in classrooms;
 - ensuring that strategic planning includes consideration of how current equipment levels will be extended and kept up-to-date.

paragraphs 9, 21, 23, 28, 82, 88, 95, 101, 106, 111, 118-123, 138

- (2) Improve the progress made by the most capable pupils, by:
- ensuring that all lessons consider the particular needs of this group;
 - improving the planning and teaching for higher attainers in science and thereby raising the proportion of pupils who reach above average standards;
 - improving the opportunities for pupils to work independently and to use their initiative;
 - continuing to monitor and review the way that writing is taught to enable these pupils to have opportunities to produce examples of high quality work.

paragraphs 2-7, 15, 19, 20, 24, 32, 35, 41, 65, 68, 73, 76, 78, 80, 84-85, 90, 92, 95

- (3) Ensure that the curriculum is planned to cater for the full range of pupils in each class, by:
- continuing to review the long-term curriculum plans so that they are relevant to the needs of mixed-age classes;
 - ensuring better consistency in the planning and teaching of parallel classes;
 - ensuring that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in each subject are taught progressively as pupils move through the school.

paragraphs 23, 30, 95, 102, 106-107, 112, 114

- (4) Ensure that assessment procedures have a more positive impact on pupils' progress, as planned, by:
- agreeing manageable, effective procedures for all subjects;
 - improving the day-to-day use of marking and of individual learning targets for pupils;
 - ensuring that assessment information is used to support lesson planning.

paragraphs 27, 46-48, 51, 81, 89, 95, 101, 106, 111, 115, 123, 128, 132, 138

- (5) Improve the contribution of staff with management responsibilities, as planned, by:
- reviewing current roles and responsibilities to ensure that they meet the needs of the school at this stage of its development;
 - ensuring that staff with responsibilities carry them out conscientiously;
 - improving the monitoring of standards, teaching and the curriculum.

paragraphs 53, 55, 83, 89, 96, 102, 112

Other issues that should be considered by the school:

- ensuring that pupils have opportunities to learn about the diversity of society and culture in modern Britain;

paragraphs 15, 24, 38, 42

- ensuring that agreed procedures for financial administration and health and safety are in place and supported by appropriate documentation.

paragraphs 43-45, 54, 57

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	22	22	0	0	0
Percentage	4	12	42	42	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

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)	284
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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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 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	21	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	20	20	18
	Total	38	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (95)	95 (98)	93 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	18
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	36	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (95)	90 (85)	90 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	24	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	17	16
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	34	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (84)	90 (77)	88 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	35	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (84)	88 (77)	88 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	271	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	114

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	587,845
Total expenditure	546,119
Expenditure per pupil	1,957
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,837
Balance carried forward to next year	80,563

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate: 50 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	284
Number of questionnaires returned	141

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	42	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	46	47	6	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	62	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	54	16	4	3
The teaching is good.	35	59	1	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	56	18	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	36	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	58	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	26	58	11	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	51	47	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	2	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	48	13	4	11

Figures may not total 100 per cent owing to rounding

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

64. The Foundation Stage in this school consists of two parallel Reception classes. Children are admitted at the beginning of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. Most have attended pre-school playgroups or nurseries. Attainment on entry varies from year to year and between individuals. It is generally above the levels seen in most schools.
65. The good provision for this age group has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is good. The two teachers and the classroom assistant work well together. The teachers work closely together in the planning of activities and this provides a consistency in approach and in the experiences offered to the children in both classes. They succeed in providing activities that generally cater for the full range of attainments and maturity, although sometimes the most able children could be extended further. This is because some lessons do not include activities that maintain children's learning for the full length of the session and the early finishers are not always challenged to do more. Other lessons are planned to include too many consolidation or practice activities because there is not sufficient extra adult support to extend the children's skills further. The planning of lessons is based securely on thorough assessment systems for all areas of learning. Teachers ensure that children experience a wide range of activities each week and balance those that require adult input with sufficient chances for the children to choose their own favourites.
66. The children achieve well in their Reception year, especially in how they settle to a more formal education and to the routines expected as they move into the National Curriculum. Almost all of them are on target to attain above the levels expected in the Early Learning Goals by the end of the school year in almost all areas of learning. The exception is in their creative development where attainment is average. In their personal, social and emotional development, their achievements are particularly good and attainment is well above average.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Children make rapid progress settling into school. They concentrate very well, sitting quietly, listening to their teacher or waiting for their turn in discussions. They are interested in activities, enthusiastic and confident. Most are very good at sharing their ideas with others and working in small or large groups. They are forming very good relationships with other children and with the adults who teach them. They behave very well and show self-control when working with others. They also work independently, making sensible choices about the activities they wish to pursue. They are especially skilled at clearing up at the end of sessions; at a musical signal, they finish off and pack away their activities very efficiently. Teaching and learning are good. The staff have high expectations of how the children will behave. They encourage both independence and collaboration, providing interesting tasks to enable the children to develop these.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Attainment is above average in this area of learning. The children are mostly attentive listeners. Most speak clearly and audibly and a few show a very advanced vocabulary for their age. They enjoy stories and discuss these profitably, such as when they retold 'Jack and the Beanstalk' during the inspection. Many are skilled in identifying the sounds that make up regular spellings of words and how, in some words, two letters combine to make a single sound. They read familiar words in context and a few are already reading much more complex texts. Most attempt their own unaided writing and the highest attainers write sentences independently with well-formed letters and the correct use of capital letters and full stops. Teaching and learning are good and children's books show good progress over the year. Teachers often group the children to ensure that the range of planned activities caters for all attainments. However, during the inspection, not enough was planned in one lesson to extend further those who finished their tasks early. In

another, the teacher did not have additional adult support to extend all groups

and this resulted in them spending time on some rather routine practice tasks. The classrooms provide sufficient books, and computers are used well to give additional reading experiences, such as talking books.

Mathematical development

69. The children attain above expected levels. Most count well up to 20, and many can count well beyond this. In a lesson observed, they counted forward and back well to work out problems. They manipulate small numbers confidently, for example, adding and subtracting single digit numbers and recording their calculations in writing. The higher attainers work out change from amounts such as 20 pence. They name simple two and three-dimensional shapes. Their written work demonstrates understanding of comparisons such as 'heavier' or 'longer'. Teaching and learning are good. Activities are based on practical first-hand experiences but include written recording when this is appropriate. Children's learning is systematic because lessons are based on regular assessments of individual progress. The main numeracy sessions in both classes benefit from good support from the classroom assistant and this promotes the children's progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Attainment is above expected levels. Children are keen to learn about the world around them. They show a good basic scientific knowledge. In a lesson seen, they planted bean seeds, commenting on how they would need light, heat and water to grow well. They are building secure foundations for work in history by comparing old and new shoes and toys and discussing different generations of their families. Geographical activities include exploring their journeys to school and discussing a suitable landscape for a castle. Their work about religion describes stories from Christianity such as the Christmas and Easter traditions. It starts to explore other religions such as how Hindus celebrate Diwali. The children use computers well, for example, when 'painting' a self-portrait using an art program. Teaching and learning are good. Work is planned effectively to give the children a range of interesting and stimulating experiences. The system that enables children to make their own daily choices from a range of activities motivates them and aids their concentration and enjoyment.

Physical development

71. Attainment is above expected levels. The physical skills used in general classroom work are developed well. The children use tools such as pencils and scissors with good control. They move around the classroom and playground sensibly with due regard to their own safety and that of others. A dance lesson was seen with one of the classes in which children worked on the theme of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' to create their own dance in response to a piece of music. They showed, for example, 'big feet, big arms and a mean face' at the teacher's request. Teaching and learning are good overall and the dance lesson observed was excellent in its planning and execution. The teacher gave very effective explanations and demonstrations. At present, the school is developing the outdoor play area for this group and this is appropriate. Children do not currently have opportunities to play on large wheeled toys but these have been ordered and should soon be in use.

Creative development

72. In the aspects of creative development seen during the inspection, attainment met expected levels. Children have regular art experiences and use a suitable range of media and tools. They work carefully and were seen, for instance, mixing paint colours well to achieve subtle shades of green when making their beanstalk leaves. Too often, all children are given very similar art tasks that are prescribed by their teachers. While these are satisfactory, they do not give much scope for individuality or imagination and the finished products are often very alike. Opportunities for role

play and drama are provided in situations such as the area currently designated as a castle. While these again are satisfactory, the quality and organisation of resources could be improved to provide more stimulating and productive activities. Children have regular musical experiences, both in class and as part of larger gatherings such as singing

sessions with Years 1 and 2. Teaching is satisfactory in the range of activities provided. It would benefit from more attention to children developing and communicating their own ideas in art and to providing higher quality resources for role play.

ENGLISH

73. Standards are above average in English and higher than at the time of the previous inspection. They are well above average in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in writing are above average. The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress. There are no marked differences in achievement between boys and girls. The school has rightly identified the need to improve writing standards, to bring them closer to pupils' attainment in the other aspects of English.
74. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is high across the school. Pupils listen attentively to the teachers and to each other. Most pupils, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, contribute to discussion and speak clearly and confidently. They are prepared to question, think aloud and give extended explanations, often using vocabulary precisely.
75. Attainment in reading is well above average. By the age of seven, all but a few lower attaining pupils are reading independently with good understanding. They discuss books and preferences and they enjoy reading. Pupils of all abilities are able to locate information in non-fiction texts. Although some lower attaining pupils read aloud hesitantly, they are able to sound out more difficult words and can use other cues to work out meaning. The highest attaining pupils read fluently from their own choice of books, often intended for much older readers. By the age of eleven, all pupils are able to read from appropriately challenging texts. Higher and average attaining pupils make perceptive judgements and are quick to respond to nuance.
76. Attainment in writing varies. It is above average overall, and there are examples of even higher attainment in Year 1 and in Year 5. By the end of Year 2, higher and average attaining pupils are writing in clearly punctuated sentences and organising stories and explanations logically. The writing of lower attaining pupils is increasing in accuracy but handwriting and letter formation is less well developed. By the end of Year 6, most pupils write fluent narrative and imaginative poetry and all show increasing accuracy with spelling and punctuation. They are less assured when writing formally and do not always adopt an appropriate style or language for the purpose. There is no consistently applied policy for teaching cursive writing across the school so that some older pupils continue to print. In most years, apart from Year 5, there are too few opportunities for extended writing.
77. Pupils show very positive attitudes towards their learning in English. They are enthusiastic about books and reading. They support each other very well and genuinely applaud the achievements of others when they present their work. When they are provided with challenging work, they respond well.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 with examples of good teaching. Teachers prepare and plan well for different age and attainment groups. They make good use of the time in the literacy hour, preparing lively appropriate activities to reinforce spelling and vocabulary. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning assistants so that they can contribute and achieve. The final 'plenary' session is used well to celebrate pupils' efforts. For example, in one lesson, pupils shared the tongue twisters they had written, reinforcing their understanding of initial letter sounds and combinations. However,

over the year, there has been too much dependence on worksheets and not enough opportunities for continuous writing in these age groups.

79. The quality of teaching and learning is also satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, with some examples of good and excellent teaching. Where the teaching is most effective, pupils are given stimulating models for writing. Teachers' questioning includes all pupils and provides opportunities for reflection and invention. In a Year 5 lesson, where pupils were challenged to imitate the style of Kenneth Grahame's 'The Wind in the Willows', the teacher used examples from the pupils' own writing to demonstrate desired features. She showed the class how to vary sentences using phrases, subordinate clauses and imagery. The whole class rose to the challenge and imaginatively incorporated the required stylistic embellishments in their own writing. Thus one boy wrote, *'The sound of the wind whistling through the boughs became a mean snigger'* and another *'Mole drowned in the darkness of a tree'*.
80. However, in the majority of classes, opportunities for extended writing are limited and teachers do not ensure that all pupils achieve an appropriate measure of success with a particular type of writing before moving on to another. Higher attaining pupils are not consistently stretched; lower attaining pupils often do not complete a piece of writing. Guidance for pupils on how they might improve their writing is often given at the end of the task rather than while they are working on it.
81. The marking of pupils' work is positive and encouraging but teachers do not always give an accurate assessment of what a pupil has achieved. The use of individual and group literacy targets has recently been introduced but these are not given consistently.
82. The National Literacy Strategy has now been fully adopted and there is good provision for pupils needing additional literacy support. All pupils are given opportunities for drama in English. There are some opportunities to use ICT, for example the use of spelling programs and word-processing, but not enough opportunities to draft and edit writing using computers.
83. The role of the subject leaders for English has been underdeveloped until recently. They have received virtually no opportunities to observe teaching and they are insufficiently aware of the inconsistencies and variations in teaching, learning and standards across the school. Consequently improvements since the previous inspection are no more than satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

84. Standards in mathematics for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are above average. This is an improvement on the last report when standards were above average at the age of eleven but only average at the age of seven. One of the reasons that standards are above average is that a high proportion of pupils meet or exceed the nationally expected levels for their age. There are few lower attainers. Pupils enter the school with above average standards. They make satisfactory progress through the school but higher attaining pupils often do not make enough progress at times because their work is not challenging enough. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The few pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys.
85. The school has satisfactorily implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. The 'mental starter' at the beginning of the lesson normally sets a good pace before the main part of the lesson is introduced. Towards the end of each lesson, an effective review session takes place in which teachers find out how much has been learned and understood. Teaching and learning in lessons currently vary from satisfactory to very good; overall they are satisfactory. Some good lessons and one very good lesson, were observed. In these lessons, the teachers set a good pace and knew their subject well. They gave questions orally and in writing to suit the pupils' needs. What is to be learned in a lesson is shared with the pupils when the lesson begins. Where teaching and learning are only satisfactory, the pace is often slower and is not taxing enough for the higher attainers; as a result there is not as big an impact on their progress. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good and the teachers manage the pupils well. One of the criticisms in the last

report was that there were not enough opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations. This has now been rectified. There were a number of examples of investigative and problem solving activities in both the books and the lessons observed.

86. Pupils in Year 1 know, for example, the names of basic symmetrical shapes, can tell the time by the half hour and hour and can add a one-digit number to a two-digit number. They know how to pay for toys and select the correct change. Year 2 pupils multiply by 2 and 10, halve shapes and sets and can easily add on 10 to a number. In a good lesson observed with pupils in Years 1 and 2, pupils were able to collect the correct coins from a money bag to make, for example, 87 pence.
87. The majority of pupils in Year 3 can answer questions on halving and doubling. This was observed in one good lesson where pupils doubled eighty and halved seventy. From analysis of their work, they interpret tables and graphs and calculate the perimeter of shapes. Year 4 pupils add numbers to 1000, describe polyhedra and calculate areas of rectangles. In another lesson, pupils knew the number of degrees the hands of a clock turned, for instance, 210 degrees from 12 o'clock to 7 o'clock. Year 5 pupils plot points on a grid, understand basic probability and the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.
88. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems. In Year 6 these involved the multiplication of fractions and finding complex equivalents in fractions, decimals and percentages. From an analysis of their work, pupils in this age group, for example, know their multiplication tables accurately up to and beyond ten times, manipulate very large numbers and investigate questions on mean, median and mode. They represent and interpret data in a variety of forms such as line graphs. In all areas of the school, pupils' ability to use ICT to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is poorly developed. This is because teachers do not provide enough opportunities.
89. Although some assessment takes place with optional tests at Years 3, 4 and 5 and at half-termly intervals, it is not uniform. Improvements in procedures and the use of assessment are initiatives in the school improvement plan. The subject leader is acting in a 'caretaking' capacity and gives sound support. Up to now, however, there has been too little monitoring of lessons, teachers' planning or standards. With this exception, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

90. Standards of pupils' work at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average, with some pupils achieving higher than the nationally expected levels. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Boys' and girls' attainment is at similar levels. Given the attainment on entry of pupils and their performance in subjects such as English and mathematics, standards should be higher than at present and pupils' progress better than it is. Under the leadership of the new headteacher, science standards are a focus for improvement and indications are that an effective start has been made.
91. By the end of Year 2, pupils can follow instructions to carry out their investigations. They are developing an understanding of the need to make their tests fair. Through this work, they have learned that plants need sunshine, soil and water to grow well. They can name the main parts of plants and understand the cycle of plant growth. Pupils identify a good range of materials and say whether they are natural or manufactured. Some pupil use this knowledge to say why some materials are unsuitable for certain purposes, for example why we would not make a teapot out of chocolate or a football out of glass. They know that some can be changed by heating them but that others cannot.
92. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed their understanding of fair testing and they are more precise when carrying out investigations. However, they still rely on teachers to plan their investigations for them and to tell them how to record their results. They are able to reach sensible conclusions but their ability to explain what happened using appropriate scientific terminology is underdeveloped. Pupils have a secure understanding of the water cycle and know

what causes condensation and evaporation. They know about light sources and understand reflection and the formation of shadows. They can use a range of methods to separate mixtures of different materials. They know what the different forces are and are developing an understanding of balanced and unbalanced forces. Pupils have a sound understanding of electrical circuits. They can draw them using the correct symbols.

93. Pupils have positive attitudes and take care with the presentation of their work. They are keen to complete relevant homework when it is set. They particularly enjoy investigative work. Pupils show very good levels of co-operation when working in groups. They are quick to offer to help each other. Pupils generally listen well to the teacher and to each other. They are keen to both ask and answer questions. Where learning support assistants are present, they provide good support for the pupils they are responsible for and others nearby.
94. Teaching and learning are sound. During the inspection there was evidence of good and very good practice. However, looking at the work done by pupils over the last year and in different classes, the variation is such that, overall, the recent teaching is judged to be only satisfactory. Several strengths were apparent from the lessons observed and from a study of pupils' previous work. The teachers' management of pupils is often very good and teachers are well organised, making good use of the time and resources available to them. An interesting range of activities is planned and, whenever possible, teachers make lessons more interesting by arranging visits or visitors. Science Week is well planned and includes a very good range of interesting activities which the pupils enjoy and talk enthusiastically about. Teachers use questioning well to find out what pupils know and to get them to apply their knowledge in new situations.
95. The relative weaknesses in teaching and learning are that planning does not take sufficient account of the different ages and abilities of pupils in the same class and expectations of the higher attaining pupils are too low. Assessment is weak and is not helping teachers match work to pupils' needs. The marking of work does not indicate to pupils what they have done well or how they might improve. Teachers of parallel classes do not necessarily teach the same work and this makes planning in subsequent years very difficult. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to show initiative and independence at the top end of the school and, across the school, teachers make insufficient use of computers to support and extend pupils' learning.
96. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. Although the subject leader's role is improving, there is still insufficient monitoring to ensure consistency in the teaching of science across the school. Assessment has been rightly identified as an issue that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency but it is only in the early stages of development at the current time. The subject leader has improved the range and storage of resources since the last inspection. They are now adequate and are easily accessible. Since the last inspection, a new policy has been written and the local education authority's recommended programme of work has been adopted.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Pupils achieve average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6, as at the time of the last inspection. However, the quality of work is variable throughout the school. Pupils produce work of both a good and a low standard. Similarly, pupils in parallel classes achieve different standards. Attainment is better in some classes than others.
98. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have carried out some interesting work this year, generally related to ongoing work in their class topics. They have acquired skills in the use of paint, pencils and fibres. They have competently copied the work of Van Gogh and have produced some lovely sunflower paintings, showing the ability to mix colours competently in paint. However, the colouring of their Arctic pictures with crayons and felt pens is relatively weak and pupils need more guidance and practice on how to apply their colour evenly. Pupils have learned how to weave and one class has produced some particularly good weaving sculptures using natural materials such as twigs, leaves, fabrics and threads. Pupils use paper folding techniques to create a range of effects, for example, twisting, scrunching, curling, plaiting and pleating. Their

close observation skills are developing but they need more advice if they are to improve at an appropriate rate.

99. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop their skills and acquire new ones. They work with a broader range of materials, for example using ink and bleach to create effects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have produced some very competently executed three-dimensional clay tiles. These show good attention to detail and good manipulative skills. Their work on distorting images of people is good. Pupils have produced paintings in the style of the Impressionists and these indicate very competent colour-mixing skills. However, work in sketchbooks is of a much lower standard. Sketches of Victorian houses show relatively weak drawing skills and lack of attention to detail. Similarly, while a minority have produced detailed drawings of torches, most have found it difficult and have not, for example, used shading techniques to show the curves. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a secure understanding of the work of different artists such as David Hockney and Peter Breughel. They understand what the important features of their work are and this has enabled them to produce some good work in the style of these artists. However, although pupils have opportunities to work with different materials, too often the choice is restricted and the materials provided are not always the most suitable for the purpose. As a result, the quality of their work is inconsistent and pupils cannot always achieve their full potential.
100. Pupils generally have positive attitudes towards the subject. They enjoy practical work and try hard most of the time. They behave well and listen carefully to the teacher and each other. Pupils are often keen to share what they have done with the rest of the class. They show honesty and sensitivity when asked to comment on each other's work. Pupils are quick to offer to help each other and are good at sharing resources and taking turns.
101. The teaching of art and design is satisfactory overall. However, it is very variable across the school. Some teachers are less secure in their subject knowledge and their pupils do less well. Others are able to teach some aspects of the work well, but find some areas difficult. The following strengths and weaknesses were apparent from the lessons observed and the scrutiny of pupils' work:
- planning is detailed but it does not take sufficient account of the different ages and abilities of the pupils in the class;
 - good links are made with ongoing work in other subjects;
 - pupils are very well managed;
 - teachers are well organised and make good use of the time and resources available to them;
 - clear explanations and competent demonstrations of new skills and techniques are provided;
 - assessment is not taking place and hence pupils are not sure how well they are doing or how they could improve;
 - because of weak assessment, teachers are not always sure about the level of work they should plan to ensure pupils consistently build upon prior knowledge and skills;
 - insufficient use is made of computers to support and extend learning.
102. The leadership and management of art and design are satisfactory. The subject leaders are skilled and able to provide useful advice and guidance to other teachers. They are developing their monitoring role this year but have not yet had the chance to visit lessons or to see teachers' weekly lesson plans. Consequently, they have not yet had chance to improve the consistency of pupils' experiences within and across classes. The school now has an appropriate policy and is following the Cambridgeshire Scheme of Work. This ensures the National Curriculum requirements are met but it still needs refining to ensure that there is logical progression in the acquisition of skills as pupils move through the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. No design and technology was taught during the inspection, so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Judgements are based on an examination of pupils'

past work, an examination of teachers' planning and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils. On this evidence, standards meet expected levels by Year 2 and Year 6.

104. By the end of Year 2, pupils draw simple diagrams of what they intend to make. The higher attaining pupils annotate these to indicate their choice of materials and colours. Pupils use scissors carefully when cutting out and they are able to choose sensible materials to make their products. They are able to use simple methods of joining materials, such as tape, glue, string and split pins. Pupils know how to create movement and have used the skill to make moving pictures of the Arctic and Antarctic as part of their geography topic. Photographic evidence shows pupils working very well together in small groups to make castles out of recycled materials, as part of their history topic. They choose materials thoughtfully and use their knowledge about creating movement to make drawbridges and opening doors. They take good care with the finish of their models and they are of a good standard.
105. Pupils improve their practical skills as they move through the school. Their designs are drawn more carefully and are annotated in more detail. However, they are not expected to explore a range of ideas, select the most suitable and justify their choice. Drawings are not made from different angles and they do not show measurements. Pupils evaluate their work, but it is at the end rather than in an ongoing way and it is at a basic level following teacher guidance rather than using their own ideas. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to make artefacts which take into account the needs of the user. Although a range of skills is used and the products well finished, too often the end product is tightly prescribed by the teacher, as is the choice of materials. Such work includes the jewellery and embroidery linked to the Tudors topic in Years 3 and 4. The traps made to catch mini-beasts in Years 5 and 6 show good designing and making skills and clear thinking about suitability for purpose. Evaluation of tasks is a weakness throughout the school.
106. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities, which link well to ongoing work in other subjects. However this means that pupils do not systematically develop their skills in a logical sequence and consequently their progress is not as good as it might be. Teachers clearly teach basic practical skills competently but often the work set is more prescriptive than it should be, particularly with older pupils. Assessment is not in place. As a result, teachers are not clear about the level pupils are working at or what they need to do to achieve the next level. Consequently, they are not always able to provide pupils with the guidance or opportunities they need to develop further. Pupils have few opportunities to use ICT in their work.
107. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and are clearly improving. The recently appointed subject leader is enthusiastic and keen to fulfil her new role competently. She has improved the range and accessibility of resources already and has produced a sensible action plan, which correctly identifies the areas requiring development. The school now has a policy and follows the Cambridgeshire Scheme of Work, which is an improvement on the last inspection. However, the subject leader is sensibly examining everyone's planning to ensure that the activities planned are in a logical sequence. She is also considering the best method of assessing pupils' work so that it is easy to use and applied consistently by all teachers.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Pupils achieve average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6, although there is some variation between parallel classes, with some pupils doing better in some aspects of the work than others. This shows a fall in standards since the last inspection. This is mainly because Year 5 and 6 pupils are now taught together. Teachers aim the level of work at the middle range of ability, which means the older and higher attaining pupils do not have the chance to reach the standards of which they are capable.
109. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know what maps are and what they are used for. They know what the climate and life are like in the Arctic and the Antarctic and they know which animals live there. They know that the climate varies in different parts of the world and that it affects what people

wear. They understand that a range of transport is needed to travel to different parts of the world, but they do not know enough for them to choose the appropriate method of transport to complete particular journeys. Their new work on the fictitious Isle of Struay has shown them what an island is like and they have begun to see how life there is different from their lives in Over. However, they have little understanding of how the physical features of the two locations are different.

110. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have been studying the features of mountain regions. They know how some of the features are formed and how height affects the temperature and what can be grown. All can describe life in the particular mountains they are studying. However, only one class has also considered the positive and negative impact of tourism on an Alpine village. Pupils have studied the formation of rivers and can name the main features. All use maps to find places and to find out about temperature and rainfall. They know what the climate is like at the Equator and the Poles. They know how to use lines of latitude and longitude to locate places. They can use and give six-figure grid references and understand symbols on Ordnance Survey maps. Pupils are less secure when asked to draw their own sketch maps and create their own keys, as the lessons during the inspection demonstrated. Pupils have studied life in an economically less developed country and can describe it. Not all have had the chance to analyse the similarities and differences between living here and there. Those who have done so showed good analytical skills and this aspect of their work was above average.
111. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection varied from satisfactory to very good. This mirrors the work seen in pupils' books and around the school. Therefore, although there is some good and very good teaching on occasions, overall, the quality of teaching is sound. The following strengths and areas for development were apparent from the lessons observed and the scrutiny of work:
- teachers are well organised and make good use of the time and resources available to them;
 - learning objectives are clear and shared with pupils so they know what is expected of them;
 - in the best lessons, teachers plan different levels of work to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged;
 - whenever possible relevant links are made with work in other subjects;
 - pupils are well managed and behaviour is good;
 - assessment is weak and is not used to help teachers plan work that is appropriate for pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class;
 - marking rarely tells pupils what they have done well and what could be improved;
 - too little use is made of ICT to support and extend learning.
112. Leadership and management of the subject are insecure. The subject leader is absent and has been unable to undertake the monitoring role required in the job description. Consequently, practice is inconsistent throughout the school, as are standards. The Cambridgeshire Scheme of Work has been adopted and the subject leader has begun to review current practice. Her absence means this is not yet complete; gaps in learning, or work which does not develop geographical skills has not been identified and changed. The need for a common form of assessment has been recognised but has yet to be implemented. Standards have fallen since the last inspection. This is largely due to the lack of challenge provided for the older pupils in mixed-age classes and needs to be addressed. Resources have been improved and they are now more accessible.

HISTORY

113. Attainment in history is above average by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. This maintains the standards identified in the oldest pupils by the previous inspection and is an improvement in Year 2. Pupils make good progress and show an evident interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils have a developing understanding of chronology. They are able to ask and answer questions about the past and make comparisons, for example, with now and the time of Jesus or the time of the Norman Conquest. They show a good empathetic understanding of life in a Norman castle from the point of view of a servant and form opinions based on evidence of the good and bad aspects of living in a castle. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are able to research from books, fact sheets and a computer program to decide how and why the Vikings voyaged so far

from their own lands and to invade Britain. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of, and are able to compare, different periods of history outlining important events and people. They are able to discuss cause and effect. An example seen was of pupils commenting on how and why the British Empire developed during the Victorian period, the resultant benefits, and the continuing links with Britain today. They also describe social and cultural differences, for example between the lives of the rich and the poor. Pupils have fewer opportunities to compare differing sources and to evaluate conflicting evidence.

114. Although there are some variations in approach, the quality of teaching and learning is mainly good across the school. No teaching was observed in Year 1 and Year 2 but pupils had clearly learned and could remember a great deal about Norman castles because they had all participated in a 'Castle Day'. Good teaching in Years 3 and 4 is characterised by the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm. Pupils' research is stimulated through an effective balance between teacher-initiated questions and the pupils' own questions. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by fact sheets and discussion with the teacher. Higher attaining pupils are encouraged to work independently. Where teaching is less effective, the teacher is not identifying clearly enough, and distinguishing between, history skills and literacy skills. This results in imaginative poetry, for example, but pupils are not being

encouraged sufficiently to draw on primary and secondary sources of historical evidence. There is sometimes an over-reliance by teachers at both key stages on commercially produced worksheets.

115. The biggest impact on pupils' learning comes from 'Living History' days when there are opportunities for role-play, dressing in period costume and sampling the food and drink of the period. Very effective use is also made of school visits so that Year 6 pupils could still recall in detail significant features of history throughout their school career.
116. Overall, curriculum coverage is sound, with one major unit and one shorter one taught in each year. Assessment is still undeveloped, a concern mentioned in the previous inspection. Until recently the role of the subject leader was also undeveloped and she acted mainly in an informal advisory capacity for her colleagues. This year the subject leader has sampled pupils' work, checked teachers' planning and visited younger pupils' classrooms to interview them.
117. Resources are satisfactory. There is a good range of history information books and good use is made of the local library's topic loan service. Video recordings, pictures, photographs and some computer programs also enhance pupils' learning. Although some artefacts are kept, or borrowed from local museums, the school relies heavily on pupils bringing artefacts from home. A central store of resources could be further developed. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards are in line with expected levels by Year 2 but well below expectations by Year 6. The achievements of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and reflect recent improvements in the subject. In the lessons seen with pupils in Years 3 to 6, pupils were taught well and often achieved well at particular tasks. However, they are starting from a low baseline. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular have not built up the expected knowledge, understanding or skills during their time in school.
119. The improvement of standards in the subject was a key issue from the last inspection. The action taken was not effective in achieving this quickly enough. Prior to this school year, especially in Years 3 to 6, pupils have used computers mainly for word-processing. Their skills are underdeveloped in many other applications. The new headteacher has an accurate grasp of current standards and provision. She has acted swiftly to improve the status of the subject in the school and to provide better resources. A new computer suite has been developed but had only been in use for three weeks at the time of this inspection. Teachers are now able to put into

practice the skills they have acquired in training over recent years but have yet to have a substantial effect on the overall standards achieved by the older pupils.

120. By Year 2, pupils compile text and add graphics to their work. A few write and display their work at considerable length, composing their own books for others to read and presenting their poems in an attractive way. They manipulate text and images soundly by, for instance, changing size, style, position and colour. They construct and interpret simple graphs. They are beginning to understand the routines necessary to find and save files and to print their work. They control items such as tape recorders and 'floor robots'. They design and 'paint' their own pictures using a computer.
121. The current and future work planned for the older pupils indicates satisfactory coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum, although this has only recently been approached systematically. Pupils in the Year 3/4 classes are making rapid progress during their lessons in the computer suite. They are improving their typing and presentation skills, for example, when writing accounts of their 'Tudor Day', and have used e-mail to keep in touch with a classmate visiting Australia. They are beginning to display data in graphs, such as one produced following a breakfast survey, and to search a database to answer questions. In the lessons seen in the Year 5/6 classes, pupils created tables to display information about a geography topic, making good progress in their understanding and speed. Work on display from this term shows that they can present their written work well by producing a final draft on the computer. One class combined text and digital images in a good newspaper format. However, the evidence of previous work on other aspects of the subject in this age group is very limited. A discussion with representatives from Year 6 indicated that a very high proportion of pupils have access to computers at home but have not had enough opportunities and input from school to practise their skills. For example, they have not experienced control or monitoring programs or used the Internet for research in school. During the inspection, the computer suite was used well by all age groups but classroom machines remained largely unused for most of the day.
122. The teaching and learning seen during the inspection were good. Evidence from pupils' previous work indicates sound teaching in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory teaching for many older pupils. The strengths in the teaching seen were:
- most teachers' secure subject knowledge of the unit of work studied;
 - clear objectives for lessons that pupils understood;
 - good explanations of tasks and ongoing support for pupils in lessons;
 - good linking of tasks to other subjects to make them relevant and interesting for pupils;
 - good management of pupils' behaviour in the computer suite.

The relative weaknesses in teaching and learning were:

- pupils' lack of confidence and knowledge when using the new suite;
 - a few teachers who lack the necessary expertise to develop pupils' skills effectively;
 - not enough use of the classroom computers.
123. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has a sound grasp of standards in the school and how much remains to be achieved for standards to rise sufficiently. The new resources in the school are of good quality but limitations persist. For example, it was not possible for a whole class to use the Internet in a planned session during a lesson seen owing to the constraints of the current network. Assessment procedures are yet to be agreed and established so that, currently, teachers do not have enough information about pupils' attainment to make their planning as effective as it might be.

MUSIC

124. Standards by both the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. This is an improvement on the last report when standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. There is good

progress and pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The few pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress in acquiring the language skills necessary to take part in lessons. There is no marked difference in the performance of boys and girls.

125. There are a number of reasons for the improvement in standards since the last inspection:
- the school uses the specialist talents of the subject leader to teach music to the oldest pupils;
 - the tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers is a strength of the school with tuition in brass, string, woodwind, keyboard and percussion;
 - fifty-five pupils have extra music tuition and a number pass external examinations;
 - the specialist teachers also give short concerts or lead assemblies periodically to promote the instruments to the pupils;
 - there is a strong choir which practises as part of extra-curricular activities and gives musical performances twice a year.
126. Singing was a strength in the last report and remains so. The singing by all the pupils in the assemblies seen was good. A temporary teacher seen had a very good singing voice and in one singing assembly she and the pupils sang unaccompanied when practising hymns. They sang in tune, melodiously and with expression and clear diction. One of the hymns was sung well in a round. There was also a good singing lesson with Years 3 and 4 where the pupils sang a number of songs tunefully.
127. In one lesson the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 were able to make different sounds from sources related to the weather. They experimented well with their instruments. Pupils worked well together to produce a combined effect of thunder, lightning and hailstones. Because a large number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn musical instruments, they are able to apply their knowledge when composing and performing in class. This was noted in one lesson when pupils, in groups of four, were beginning to compose and perform 12-bar blues with percussion. They were challenged and worked well together. By the end of the lesson, all the groups were able to give a performance, although their pieces still needed practice and polish.
128. Teaching and learning throughout the school are good and an improvement on the last inspection. There is sufficient challenge to extend pupils' creative abilities. Although the subject leader is absent, the temporary teacher is competent in leading sessions in her place. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and behave well in lessons. They are well managed. Assessment is very informal at present and is an area for development. Resources, which recently included a donation of £1,500 from the parent teacher association, are good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with national expectations. The picture was much the same in the last report when standards were judged to be satisfactory. There is no difference in the standards of boys and girls. Satisfactory progress is made by all pupils including those with special learning or physical needs.
130. Although some good lessons were observed, overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the good lessons, teachers were able to demonstrate well various skills. For example, in a lesson with pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher demonstrated how to hold a hockey stick correctly and push and dribble with a ball. As a result, the pupils copied her and improved their skills as the lesson progressed. In another good lesson with Years 5 and 6, the teacher demonstrated how to field a cricket ball correctly, on one knee, and how to catch and throw to a partner. Again, the impact was that pupils improved their fielding and catching as the lesson progressed with a game of 'Danish Long Ball'. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers are not as secure with their own skills or do not plan activities that promote such good progress. In two other satisfactory lessons with pupils in Years 3 and 4, pupils were challenged to solve puzzles. Some found parts of this difficult, such as turning a carpet over without stepping off it. There was

an emphasis on team-building but little physical activity. Pupils enjoy physical education and work well together in pairs, small groups and teams.

131. All areas of the curriculum are covered. Topics are planned in half-termly blocks so it was not possible to observe any dance or gymnastics. Games skills and outdoor activities were observed during the inspection. The school has its own swimming pool which the whole school uses effectively. Most pupils can swim at least the required 25 metres by the time they leave school at the age of eleven. There is a good-sized hall that is used regularly. Inside the school grounds there is a hard surface play area and a small grass pitch which are adequate for teaching some skills. However, the school has the use of a large field nearby. Teachers are conscious of health and safety matters and point these out to pupils in lessons. Sports coaching is used well. Football, cricket, hockey, athletics and netball are all taught in lessons and representatives from Cambridge United Football Club, a cricket coach and a netball coach help in after school clubs. Pupils practise their skills effectively in matches against other schools.
132. The recently appointed subject leader manages provision satisfactorily. Assessment arrangements are too informal to be useful to teachers and pupils; these arrangements have been identified for improvement in the school's plans.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is similar to the findings of the last report. Up to the end of Year 2, pupils study Christianity and Judaism. Pupils continue with these two religions up to the end of Year 6 alongside Sikhism, Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism and this is wider coverage than at the time of the last inspection.
134. At the end of Year 2, pupils reach the expected standard in their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a lesson with a Year 1 and 2 class about Moses in the context of Judaism, most pupils were able to remember the story of Moses in the bulrushes and to write a version of the story. The range of attainment varied widely according to age and ability, with the older Year 2 pupils writing sentences and the less able in Year 1 drawing a picture and writing a sentence connected with it. An analysis of work of these pupils shows that they recall other Bible stories such as the parable of the Prodigal Son and Jesus helping a man with leprosy. They can also relate the Christmas story.
135. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 build on their knowledge soundly. They are able, for example, to retell the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Lost Sheep. They wrote the story of Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter Day. They record details of the eightfold path of Buddhism and the spiritual journey towards Nirvana, although for some pupils the deeper meaning of these was only at a superficial level.
136. In studying Christianity, pupils in Year 6 are able to relate the main points of the Christian year. In addition, they can remember, from a visit, the main features of the inside of a church. In one lesson, the teacher explored the feelings and beliefs associated with the major festivals from two different viewpoints, those of the Baptist minister and the Church of England vicar in the village. In studying Islam, pupils know, for example, that an imam leads the prayers, that the Qur'an is the Muslim holy book and that Muslims worship in a mosque.
137. Teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory, although the pace is often a little slow. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they were managed well. Most lessons contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. This was also the case in several of the whole school assemblies seen.
138. Overall, management of the subject is sound and the subject leader's expertise is used in teaching all three classes in Years 5 and 6. Assessment is inconsistent but is being developed through the school improvement plan. In addition to the Baptist minister coming into school the local vicar, who is also the Chair of Governors, takes assemblies and talks to Years 1 and 2 pupils about topics such as baptism. Last term, some Year 6 Islamic children visited and talked about their faith. Pupils visit the parish church and visit Ely Cathedral, but do not have opportunities to visit the places of worship of religions other than Christianity. There was little use made of ICT during the inspection and this is an area for further development.