

INSPECTION REPORT

**ANTHONY CURTON
CHURCH of ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Walpole St Peter, Wisbech

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121138

Headteacher: Mrs Rachel Voss

Reporting inspector: Mrs Marianne Harris
23288

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th October 2002

Inspection number: 248229

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Richard Blunt
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd – 26 th May 2000

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Marianne Harris 23288	Registered inspector	Science Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Educational inclusion, including race equality	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Viv Phillips 9053	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Provision for pupils' personal development
Peter Sudworth 2700	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography Music	How well is the school led and managed?
Jo Cheadle 23233	Team inspector	English History Physical education Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? <i>Support for assessment</i>
John Tyler 20506	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design	<i>Support for how well the school is led and managed</i>

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Anthony Curton is a Voluntary Aided Church of England primary school. It is smaller than average with 158 pupils, including some in the reception class who attend part time. The school is in a rural part of Norfolk and serves the local villages, catering for pupils from four to eleven years of age. About one third of all pupils have special educational needs, and five pupils have a statement of need. This is above the national average. The needs of these pupils vary, and include learning difficulties and those who are physically less able. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language, and the children are mainly from white British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, about a quarter, is also above average. When they enter school the children have knowledge and skills that are well below those expected and, overall, the pupils come from families whose social circumstances are less affluent than average. Until recently there have been several changes of headteacher and, in previous years, there has been a significant turnover of staff. A new headteacher is now in post and staffing is settled.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and it provides a sound education for the pupils. The recently appointed headteacher has, in a short space of time, provided good leadership and management. The governing body is taking a leading role in shaping the direction of the school and has been actively involved in drawing up the appropriate targets for school improvement. Teaching is sound and the headteacher, governors and staff have established rigorous procedures to monitor the work of the school. They are well placed to implement the necessary improvements. Although standards of attainment remain well below average in English mathematics and science, pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory, given their low starting point. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get off to a good start in the reception class.
- Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology.
- Good provision for moral and social development results in pupils behaving well.
- Relationships within the school are good.
- Pupils are well cared for.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are too low.
- Teachers' marking does not tell pupils how to improve their work.

- Pupils' reports do not give sufficient information to parents.
- Too many pupils are absent without good reason.

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 May 2000 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Improvement in the two years since this inspection has been good. There have been significant improvements in the teaching and provision for information and communication technology, which have led to the pupils becoming more confident when using computers. Standards are now in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good progress. The weaknesses identified in the leadership and management of the school, including weaknesses in the governing body, have been tackled appropriately. The interim headteacher, and now the new headteacher, have rigorously monitored the work of the school, and it is the view of the inspection team that the school no longer has serious weaknesses.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	B	E	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	D	D	C	
science	D	E	E	E	

Schools are categorised as similar according to the number of children known to be eligible for free school meals.

Although the 2002 test results were well below average, in mathematics they compare satisfactorily with those of similar schools. In English, results are below those of similar schools, and in science they remain well below. However, these grades disguise an improving trend over recent years that exceeds the national picture. This is because only small groups of pupils take the tests and the results of one pupil can have significant impact on the grade. In 2002 the school did not reach the challenging targets it had set itself in English and mathematics, but results overall improved. For example, those pupils who are more able attain higher standards than expected nationally, although the number was low when compared to other schools. Work seen during the inspection reflects the test results in Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory given their low starting point.

Test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 are similarly low. In reading and writing standards were well below those of other schools, and in mathematics standards were below those normally found. Teacher assessment results in science were below those found nationally and those found in similar schools. More able pupils in Year 2, however, attain standards in reading and mathematics that are above those found in similar schools. Work seen during the inspection confirms the test results. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

Children in the reception class come into school with skills and knowledge that are well below those expected. They make good progress during the reception year, but about a quarter of the children will not achieve the *Early Learning Goals* by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the reception class and satisfactory progress during their time in school. In subjects

other than English, mathematics and science, pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected, except in art where standards are below those normally found. Pupils in Year 6 attain similar standards, except in art and history where, again, standards are below those normally found.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school, usually settle to work well and are generally interested in their lessons. When lessons are lively pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well around the school and in the playground. In class behaviour is good when lessons are interesting, but pupils become distracted and call out when lessons are unsatisfactory. There has been one exclusion during the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils are polite and considerate. Boys and girls, and the small number of children who are less physically able, are all included and get along well with one another and with adults.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. Although the procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory, too many parents keep their children away from school for no good reason.

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.

The quality of teaching in the reception class is good. Work is well planned and based on clear assessments of what the children already know. Teaching in the other classes is satisfactory, although a significantly higher proportion of good and very good teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. Teaching of English and mathematics throughout the school is satisfactory. However, some teachers in Years 3-6 are not always sufficiently aware of what the pupils already know and this slows the progress the pupils make, particularly in some English lessons. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and are able to manage the isolated incidents of misbehaviour well. In the most effective lessons teachers had high expectations of their pupils and gave clear, precise explanations. They ensured that activities were interesting and the pupils concentrated well, worked hard and learnt a lot. The learning intention for these lessons was effectively shared with the class so that the pupils knew exactly what they would learn, and it was reviewed at the end of the lesson to ensure that the objective had been achieved.

In less effective lessons, teachers did not provide tasks and activities that captured the pupils' attention. Expectations were not always high enough and this resulted in fidgety behaviour. A few lessons lasted too long and this, too, resulted in the pupils losing interest. The quality of marking overall is generally weak with teachers not telling the pupils what they need to do to improve their work. In some instances marking is over-generous, giving the false impression that work is of a really high standard when it clearly is not. Pupils are not sure what the teachers' marking means and therefore do not know how to improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. National Curriculum requirements are met. This has improved since the last inspection.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is sound provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are well supported and make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils who are not physically able participate fully in lessons and are very well supported in class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils willingly take on responsibility for being playground friends and members of the school council. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good, and this results in good behaviour and relationships. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory, but spiritual development is unsatisfactory because there are too few opportunities for pupils to explore their own values and beliefs, and those of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All of the staff take good care of the pupils. The school's procedures for child protection are very good. There are good, clear procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is good. Incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately.
Assessment	Systems for assessing pupils' progress are sound, and the information gained is being used to improve teachers' planning. However, the information is not being used consistently to set targets for pupils in order to raise standards.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents have positive views of the school, but the school has not developed an effective partnership with parents. For example, reports given to parents are not sufficiently detailed to ensure that they know what their children have learnt. In turn, few parents support school events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The new headteacher has clear plans to raise standards. She is well supported by the senior management team, but some of the key subject co-ordinators have not been sufficiently focused on leading the improvement of standards in their subject and this has meant that standards remain low.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities appropriately. They are supportive of the school and have taken a leading role in the recent improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are now good systems in place for appraising staff and monitoring teaching. This has resulted in recent improvements in teaching, but has yet to have an impact on standards. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the principles of best value and has begun to assess how well the school is doing.
The strategic use of resources	Specific grant funding is used appropriately and the school's spending is linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan. There are sufficient resources to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and resources for

	information and communication technology are good.
The school's buildings and facilities	The school's accommodation is good, with large play areas, a designated outdoor space for children in the reception class, and large classrooms. However, pupils in Year 6 are housed in a temporary classroom with no toilet facilities and this is unsatisfactory.
Staffing	Staffing is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum Newly qualified teachers, and teachers new to the school, are supported appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children make good progress. • The teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is approachable if parents have concerns. • The school helps the children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors broadly agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Teachers do generally expect the pupil to work hard, but sometimes the children could achieve more and overall they make satisfactory progress. Teaching is good in the Reception Class, and there are many good features of teaching throughout the school. Overall, however, inspectors judge teaching to be satisfactory. Inspectors disagree with the view that there are not enough extra-curricular activities and judged that there was a satisfactory range of clubs outside of the normal school day.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Throughout this report, references to *Key Stage 1* relate to the infant years (Years 1 and 2) when pupils are aged 5 to 7 years. The junior years (from Year 3 to Year 6) are referred to as *Key Stage 2*, when pupils are aged 7 to 11. Children in the reception class, who are aged 5 and under, are considered to be in the *Foundation Stage*. Schools' test results are compared with the national average, as well as against 'similar schools'. Schools are grouped as similar according to the proportion of children attending who are known to be eligible for free school meals. In judging standards, inspectors analysed results attained in the national standard assessment tests (SATs) taken at the end of Years 2 and 6, both in 2002 and in previous years. Inspectors looked at work currently being done in lessons and at work done throughout last year. They listened to children read and discussed children's work with them as well as with their teachers. Whereas judgements on *attainment* relate to comparisons with nationally expected standards, *achievement* relates to the progress pupils make and compares how well children do as against their prior attainment. English, mathematics and science are referred to as *core subjects*, and a degree of priority was given in the inspection to looking at these subjects. Other curriculum subjects are sometimes referred to as *non-core* or *foundation subjects*.
2. When the children enter the reception class a significant number have had little pre-school experience and consequently their knowledge and skills are well below those expected. By the time they enter Year 1, about half of the children will have attained the *Early Learning Goals* for children in the Foundation Stage. During their time in the reception class the children make good progress due to good teaching that emphasises the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

3. In the 2002 national tests taken at the end of Year 2, results were well below the national average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, reading and writing was well below average, and mathematics was average. Current standards, overall, represent satisfactory achievement. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. There is no national test in Year 2 for science, but in the assessments made by teachers, pupils were assessed as attaining standards that were below average.
4. Test results in Year 6 have remained low in recent years, although the trend in improvements exceeds the national picture. In the 2002 tests, results in English and science were well below the national average. In mathematics, results were below average. When compared with similar schools, results in English were below average, in mathematics results were average, but in science they were well below average. Many of the pupils have difficulty retaining information and this is reflected in the science results where standards attained are largely dependent on pupils remembering accurately what they have learnt in the past. The English work seen during the inspection was well below average with too little attention being paid to developing handwriting skills, and work in lessons does not always take account of the abilities of pupils. In mathematics work seen was below average as pupils have too few opportunities to use their knowledge to investigate mathematical problems. Work in science was better than the test results with work being below average. Pupils are now able to use what they have learnt in lessons to begin to carry out science investigations. This represents sound achievement for all pupils. There has been no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls beyond that seen nationally.
5. Pupils' who have special educational needs make good progress in the Foundation Stage. The class is small and the staff are aware of the nature of the difficulties that the children experience and work is well matched to their abilities. Appropriate support is given in the reception class and this results in the children learning a lot. Pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 make steady progress with appropriate support from learning support assistants. Pupils who are more able make steady progress and have work that is challenging for them.
6. In both key stages standards are in line with those expected nationally in information and communication technology, music, design and technology, geography and physical education. In Key Stage 1, standards in history are in line with expectations although they are below at Key Stage 2. Standards in art at both key stages are below those normally expected because skills are not systematically developed. In information and communication technology, this represents good improvement in two years because standards have improved significantly due to the provision of the computer suite and improved teacher knowledge.
7. Of the parents who returned their questionnaire, 90 per cent expressed the view that their children make good progress at school. Inspectors, however, judged progress and achievement to be satisfactory throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance were described positively. An unsettled period followed the identification of serious weaknesses in

leadership, so pupils are not always sure what is expected of them. As a result, while most of the strengths identified in their attitudes and behaviour are still present in the everyday life of the school, they are less evident in lessons and as a factor in pupils' achievements. For example, most pupils generally enjoy coming to school and behave well, particularly in assemblies and at playtime. In class, pupils easily become restless and lose concentration unless teaching is lively and work is tailor-made for them. Some bad habits are evident, particularly in weaker lessons, such as pupils' tendency to call out, fidget, chat or daydream, which slows down their rates of progress.

9. Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. Their enthusiasm for learning depends on the teacher's ability to make activities as interesting as possible. When this happens, as in a high quality literacy lesson based on quick fire questions and expressive reading of 'The Enormous Watermelon', pupils respond well and show interest in what they are asked to do. Otherwise, while happy to be at school and quite willing to do as they are asked, they do not show the curiosity, persistence and care with their work associated with good attitudes to learning.
10. Pupils with special educational needs are happy to work with learning support assistants. In general they try hard to listen and concentrate, and to enjoy the work they do. In lessons the attitudes and behaviour of pupils with special educational needs are no different to the rest of the class. The majority behave well and are positive about the work they do. For a very small minority of pupils who require support for behavioural needs, levels of concentration and application to their work are sometimes low. This is especially the case when pupils' individual education plans are not used to plan for their learning, and the level of support provided for them is insufficient.
11. Behaviour is generally good. A few pupils have particular difficulty in following school rules and recognising that misbehaviour affects their work and other pupils' chances of making progress. The school has recognised their specific difficulties and is taking steps to support them. Many pupils have a limited attention span. Behaviour is much better when teaching is lively and pupils know that they must look, listen, take turns and try hard. Pupils play together well, in general. When conflicts occur, they often reflect what happens outside school rather than children's inability to get on with each other. No bullying was seen and incidents are rare. When these arise, the school deals with them effectively. The school excluded one pupil for a short period in the year prior to inspection, for appropriate reasons. The use of exclusion as a sanction for poor behaviour is rare. Taking all these factors into account, behaviour is generally good and set for improvement in response to clear and consistent management.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. When children start school, their personal, social and language skills are limited so the school gives careful attention to building confidence and friendships. Pupils of all ages have an appropriate understanding of how their actions affect others. They are better at understanding this in relation to what happens outside the class, as in talking about the effect of being left out of a game in the playground. They are less aware of the effect of spoiling someone's chances of learning, as when a child kept pulling at the chair leg of a boy who was trying to read to himself, until he reacted crossly with frustration. Pupils have fewer opportunities than might be expected to explore different feelings, beliefs and ways of life, given that the school is well aware of the relative isolation of the local community. Recently, older pupils, particularly in Year 6, have been given more chances to take responsibility in the life of the school, which they enjoy. These are not matched with opportunities for pupils to use initiative with their work and to develop greater self-reliance and independence.
13. Relationships are good and help to build an atmosphere of trust in which pupils feel safe and are happy to co-operate with adults. Pupils are keen to please and thrive on praise as evident from the

way in which a Year 3 pupil asked for more work after earning a reward for reading his description of Boudicca. Similarly, one of the youngest children glowed with pleasure when thanked for offering an inspector a piece of teacake brought by a visiting baker. The positive way in which pupils respond to adult encouragement is a good springboard for improving the rate of personal and academic progress.

14. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It was well below average until recently. This was partly as a result of the long-term ill health of one or two pupils, but also because of above average rates of unauthorised absence. Recent figures indicate that authorised absence is closer to the national average. However, unauthorised absence is still rising. Although the majority of pupils come to school every day and arrive on time, a few pupils miss too much school to make the progress of which they are capable.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Part of the focus of the inspection was on literacy and numeracy, so priority was given to observing the teaching of English and mathematics. All classes were seen being taught these subjects. A good sample of lessons was also seen in the other core subject of science, as well as in physical education where it would be difficult to judge how well children were doing by looking at past work. In most cases, inspectors were able to observe full lessons and, in judging teaching, inspectors sought evidence that pupils were learning and making progress.
16. Of the parents who returned the questionnaire, almost all expressed satisfaction with the quality of teaching and almost all said that the school has high expectations of pupils. The teaching seen ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. It was satisfactory or better in about 90 per cent of lessons. In half of the lessons seen, the teaching was good or very good, with a significant proportion of the very good teaching being observed in Years 5 and 6. Teaching in the *Foundation Stage* was always good and is particularly effective because all of the staff work very well together to ensure that all of the children are supported appropriately. Teaching was unsatisfactory in five lessons. Overall this represents satisfactory teaching and is similar to the quality of teaching seen at the time of the last inspection, except that there were no poor lessons observed. The teaching of both English and mathematics throughout the school is satisfactory overall.
17. In the most successful lessons teachers shared the learning intentions with the class and revisited them at the end of the lesson to make sure that pupils had made good progress. The objectives were clear and work was well planned to ensure that all pupils were fully involved in the lesson. Another strong feature of the teaching was the clear explanations that were given to the pupils and the high expectations for pupils' achievement. A good example of this was a Year 2 science lesson when the teacher explained the task very clearly and the pupils were able to make a circuit and then find the reason the why the bulb did not light up. Teachers form good relationships with the pupils and manage their behaviour well.
18. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, work was not well matched to the abilities of the pupils and the pace of the lessons slowed. Some lessons were over long and pupils did not achieve enough. This was evident, for example, in a history lesson when all afternoon was timetabled for the subject and the pupils became bored and restless.

19. Teachers' marking is weak. There are numerous examples of marking being over generous and comments such as "excellent work" being written in books that contained mistakes and substandard work. This leads to pupils having a false impression of the quality of their work and does not help them to improve. In discussion, pupils reported that they did not fully understand the current marking system that has been recently introduced and did not know how to make their work better.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in class. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the learning support assistant worked with a small group of pupils and they made good progress. This was because the teacher had planned the work to match the learning targets on their individual education plans (IEPs) and used information technology as a tool to encourage their interest in writing. Pupils used spell checker to spot their mistakes and attempted to correct their own work.
21. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, activities are not sufficiently varied and interesting and the pace does not ensure that pupils with special educational needs are attentive enough. This is particularly the case for pupils with behavioural needs who find concentration difficult. In some cases IEPs are not specific enough for pupils with behavioural needs and do not outline the short-term steps needed to ensure progress.

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

22. The overall quality of the school's curriculum is satisfactory, as found at the time of the last inspection. The school has responded appropriately to national guidance and support. All statutory subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. Sex education and drugs awareness are incorporated successfully in the programmes of study for personal, social and health education and the science curriculum. There is a wide range in pupils' physical and learning needs and the planned curriculum reflects these well. All pupils, regardless of academic or physical ability have good and equal access to the full curriculum.
23. The school has paid good attention to the development of the mathematics and science curriculum. Teachers now have clear guidance about how to plan for the development of numeracy skills, and the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented suitably to support pupils' learning. In science, better emphasis is now placed on pupils' skills in investigating and experimenting. The impact of this is that standards are now average in mathematics, and many pupils are working at the expected levels in science, although few are working at a higher level. There has been insufficient time for the improved curriculum provision to have a positive impact on standards in either subject by the end of Year 6.
24. Curriculum provision for English does not support teachers in providing consistently good learning opportunities throughout the school, and the National Literacy Strategy is not been used in a flexible way to target the major priorities for development in pupils' literacy skills. In Key Stage 1,

the curriculum supports pupils in the development of better mechanical reading skills, spelling and the use of grammar. However, it does not focus on the development of handwriting skills and there are too few opportunities to develop extended writing skills by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, pupils start from a below average base, but the curriculum is not accurately adapted to support progress from these low levels. Teachers use planning materials from the National Curriculum and the literacy strategy at an appropriate level overall, but do not ensure that learning starts from the point of exactly what pupils already know and can do. The result is that in some lessons, challenge is too low and pupils make insufficient progress. The planned curriculum is equally inconsistent in the development of handwriting and presentation skills and limits the opportunities for even the highest attaining pupils to attain above average standards.

25. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils' needs are appropriately identified and most have suitable individual education plans (IEPs). In a few cases, the specific needs of pupils with behavioural difficulties are not identified and catered for well. The co-ordinator had a good knowledge of pupils' needs and has clear plans to remedy this weakness.
26. The school has identified that its major priority is to develop pupils' literacy skills. The curriculum in Key Stage 2, however, does not place enough emphasis on the development of literacy skills through all subjects. The school has not yet thought carefully enough about the promotion of good literacy skills, for example through interesting history and geography lessons. Less time is spent on learning in history to allow more time in English, with the result that standards in history drop and pupils become uninterested in the same format for English lessons. Some lessons, not only in English, are also far too long, especially in afternoon sessions, and pupils become restless which affects their learning. The school has paid sufficient attention to ensuring that the overall time allocation for subjects of the curriculum is appropriate, but too little attention has been given to the personal, social and academic needs of the pupils in order to ensure that lesson format and learning opportunities are totally relevant.
27. Parents are concerned about the number and range of extra-curricular activities, but inspectors found a reasonable range, similar to that found in other schools. The gardening club has planted many bulbs and flowers to enhance the school grounds and pupils are justly proud of this. There are some sporting clubs, and some of the pupils are taught recorders. On Monday there is a club open to all of the pupils where they play board games and mix together, and this has a significant impact on the pupils' social development.
28. The school has good links with the local pre-school and the secondary school to which pupils will transfer. The reception teacher visits the local pre-school and sets up visits for those children who will join the reception class. This results in the children settling quickly into the school routine. The good links with the local secondary school have resulted in shared practice in science. By agreement the teacher in Year 6 expects the pupils to record investigations in the same format as that expected at the secondary school.
29. Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. As found in the previous inspection, the school encourages moral and social development well. It is less successful in fostering spiritual awareness than suggested in the previous report.
30. The school is not doing enough to help pupils to explore and value their own and other people's feelings, experiences and ideas. Assemblies usually begin with the lighting of a candle, but otherwise have less sense of occasion and fewer reflective or awe-inspiring moments than might be expected. In lessons, opportunities to share and value ideas are missed, particularly when

teachers talk too much or tolerate calling-out during discussions. Displays are disappointing because they rarely value pupils' ideas, personal achievements, as in the school's 'pupils of the week', or their special experiences, such as the birth of a brother or sister. The library and foyer are unusually empty of high quality personal contributions from pupils such as poems, hand-made books, photographs and pictures that reinforce how much the school values and celebrates what is special about them. As a result, the school does not help pupils to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge satisfactorily.

31. The school fosters moral and social development well. Adults' good relationships and concerned care for pupils' welfare make a significant contribution to this. Adults help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong so that even, after a short time in school, the youngest children have a good, basic idea of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, even if they need frequent reminders to show this. The result of good attention to moral and social education is seen in the good manners and courtesy of many pupils, for example in holding open doors or thanking visitors for help. The school has increased the range of responsibilities available to pupils in Years 3 to 6 so that the school council has just been revived, gardening club is thriving and a new Playground Friends' scheme is being tried. It is too early to judge the effect of these and other opportunities on pupils' personal development, but from the enthusiasm of those involved, these schemes show promise.
32. The school offers the expected range of opportunities for pupils to develop awareness of their own and other cultures within the curriculum. Pupils enjoy music and opportunities to take part in school productions, such as this summer's Cinderella. They welcome the chance to learn from trips and visits to places such as Duxford and Hunstanton that are particularly relevant to work in history and geography. They have other reasonable opportunities to learn about their own cultural heritage through experience of art, reading and traditional playground games. The school is well aware of the need to ensure that pupils have an even greater appreciation of the rich range of cultural traditions beyond the local area, to improve understanding and respect for different values and beliefs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school takes careful steps to safeguard pupils' health and welfare, as it did at the time of the previous inspection. The school's arrangements for child protection are very good, as a result of the clear lead taken by the headteacher in prioritising children's well being and ensuring that staff know what to do when there is cause for concern. The school offers good quality care that is focused on ensuring that pupils are happy, feel secure and are safe from harm. This is a good foundation for their achievement, but not yet harnessed to a drive towards higher standards.
34. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are taken as required, following the local guidelines for coding absences. The quality of recording varies: corrections to original entries are not always clear enough. When pupils reach the classroom after registration has started, but before the register is sent to the office, teachers do not note this routinely so that parents can be reminded about the need for a prompt start to the day if a pattern of lateness starts to develop. The school makes good efforts to contact parents on the first day of a pupil's unexplained absence. It is not clear enough, however, about what criteria it uses to authorise absence and about its determination to reduce the number of unexplained or inappropriate absences, including repeated term time holidays. Opportunities are missed to spell out the limited number of acceptable reasons for absence and the link between absence and learning, particularly the effects of missing several literacy and numeracy lessons. The school brochure is clear about procedures, but not about reasons for these.

35. During a period of uncertainty and changes in leadership, standards in behaviour declined, according to parents and staff. Inconsistent expectations and application of codes of conduct contributed to this. Revised policies and procedures, which emphasise encouragement of good behaviour in line with the school's promotion of moral and social development, are now in place. Whole-school rewards systems, and support for staff in managing the emotional and behavioural difficulties of a few pupils, are at an early stage of development. The school has not had time to monitor and review the effectiveness of positive behaviour management in each class and to iron out any inconsistencies in approach that might confuse pupils. However, pupils are already responding well to very clear guidance and skilled use of praise in more effective lessons and around the school. The school recognises the need to develop a simple way of recording the key features of behaviour and personal development that it currently monitors informally. Teachers and other staff know pupils well, which enables them to monitor behaviour and personal development satisfactorily. They keep good records of incidents, including bullying, which is always investigated with great care, resulting in good systems to monitor and deter such behaviour.
36. The assessment co-ordinator has a good understanding of the procedures that need to be in place so that the school has a clear picture of how well pupils are learning. He has attended training with the headteacher that has given a clear direction to his work, but the pace of development and implementation is not yet fast enough. There are adequate procedures in place in English, mathematics and science to gather information about what pupils know and can do. In English and mathematics, most teachers use this information to create suitable individual targets for pupils. These targets are sufficiently challenging and, in the best examples, give pupils a clear indication of what they must do to attain at a particular level of the National Curriculum. In other subjects, end of module assessments from national guidance materials are now being used to see how well pupils have learned. These are positive developments, as are the new of skills checklists for PE, art and information and communication technology.
37. There is, however, a lack of clarity and understanding about how this information can be used to change what is taught, in order to improve how well pupils learn. Assessment information is not yet used rigorously and consistently enough to guide what is to be taught in future lessons. This was a weakness reported during the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents' views of the school are positive, as at the previous inspection. They are quite pleased with what the school offers their children and almost all feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. They say that their children like school and that the school expects pupils to work hard. Parents believe that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. In general, the inspection confirms their positive views. Parents have some reservations about the range of activities outside lessons and standards of behaviour. The lack of before and after school care is a factor in dissatisfaction with activities outside lessons. The range of activities outside lessons is reasonable. Most pupils behave well most of the time and the school is well placed to improve standards of behaviour.
39. The school is well aware of the importance of effective links with parents and is working hard to strengthen these. It offers home visits for families whose children are about to start school. It encourages parents to become involved with their children's education, for example by attending parents' evenings to take part in setting targets for improving progress. One or two parents help regularly in classrooms and their contribution is valued. In spite of the school's hard work, parents do not respond as well as expected. The school tried to evaluate parents' views when their

children left Year 6, but only one in eight replied. Parents' involvement in the school's life and with their children's work is disappointing. At present, links with parents are not effective.

40. The school sends home a good range of information, including newsletters. It is beginning to make good use of homework diaries. However, the overall quality of information for parents is unsatisfactory, which undermines the good work done to build a successful partnership with them. Opportunities are missed to give parents a real flavour of what the school thinks is important, such as good attendance and aiming for high standards of academic and personal achievement. Furthermore, reports do not give a clear picture of what pupils have learned and what they need to do to improve. The detail and language used are too complicated. The paragraph under the heading 'targets' is not linked clearly to what the pupil has identified as a target, nor the standards reached. For example, the same targets were given, using descriptions from the National Curriculum, for pupils with quite different strengths and weaknesses who achieved different levels in national tests.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school has had a difficult time in the last twelve months, being without a permanent headteacher and with the acting headteachers having responsibilities for other schools as well. This has delayed the school's development. However, changes to the governing body and the appointment of a permanent headteacher, although very recent, are resulting in a much improved picture of leadership and management compared with the last inspection when much was criticised about the overall management and leadership of the school.
42. The newly appointed headteacher is providing good leadership and management and is giving the school much needed direction. She has monitored teaching across the school and given evaluative written and verbal feedback to every member of staff. She demonstrates a clear vision and aim for its future and for its further development. She is well supported by a governing body which is increasingly taking a more active and determined role in the life of the school under the good organising skills of the chair and vice-chair of the governors. As a result, the governors are more aware of the school's strengths and the areas for improvement, adopting a more questioning approach and contributing their own ideas for the school's future direction. Governors contributed to the priorities on the recently revised school development plan, which contains good targets to improve pupils' levels of attainment in the core subjects and to improve assessment and record keeping. The chair and vice-chair meet weekly with the headteacher to review the school's progress, to keep themselves informed and to share any difficulties which may be arising. The governing body committee structure, with appropriate terms of reference for each committee, is well organised with an ordered series of committee meetings during each term and planned well in advance. It is meeting all its statutory responsibilities. All governors are being kept well informed about the business conducted in each committee meeting.
43. The school's aims and mission statement are currently being reviewed. The existing aims are mostly being met, except for ensuring that all pupils are meeting their true potential, particularly in literacy.
44. The work of subject co-ordinators has lacked guidance because of the difficulties the school has faced, and there have been few opportunities to monitor standards of teaching adequately over recent times. There is now a clear plan which is known to all staff for the improved oversight of their subject responsibilities, including looking at standards of work and the quality of teaching. The school has a sound capacity, given the current staff to make further improvements.

45. The school has well established procedures for performance management. The senior management team have been trained and are taking responsibility, along with the headteacher, for appraising other staff.
46. The school has good accommodation. Classrooms are light and airy with extra provision for design and technology, and a library. The hall provides good provision for physical education. However Year 6 are housed in a temporary classroom without any toilet facilities and this is unsatisfactory. The school is kept in a good state of repair and cleanliness. There are attractive and well tended outside areas with satisfactory expanses of grassed and hard surface areas. Administrative areas are well furnished with good working space.
47. Learning and book resources are generally adequate in range and quantity and their quality is good. Resources for science and design and technology are good but unsatisfactory for history, which lacks artefacts or replicas from the periods being studied.
48. The school has a good number of teaching and non-teaching staff. Their experience and expertise varies, and is satisfactory overall. Teachers new to the school are supported by a mentor, which is a good approach. Overall, the school uses its budget appropriately to support educational priorities. Specific grants, such as for pupils with special educational needs, are used well and often supplemented. The present system for allocating money for the needs of subjects is based too much on historical expenditure, rather than current need and the school's priorities. The proposed new system is an improvement because it overcomes this weakness. Governors receive regular financial information and monitor the school's expenditure appropriately. The headteacher has a clear understanding of best value. Much work has been carried out to see how well the school performs against those of a similar type and care is taken to ensure that purchases are best value. A good example is that the school has not opted for the cheapest means of improving resources for information and communication technology. It has evaluated which system will aid learning most effectively, and then opted for the more expensive, but reliable one.
49. The school office makes good use of new technology. Teachers often make insufficient use of computers for planning work and leading subjects. This sometimes wastes their time, for example when plans are re-written by hand instead of being amended on computer.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Inspectors have identified the following interrelated and overlapping key issues for action. In order to improve the standard of education provided to pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should: (*Paragraph references are in brackets*)

KEY ISSUE 1

Raise standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science by:

- Sharing the good and very good practice that already exists in the school (*paras 11,16,17,23,35,50,59,60,61,68,73,74,77*)
- Improving pupils' handwriting, which is the weakest aspect of English in the school (*paras 4,24,62,82,90,91*)

- Ensuring that tasks and activities are based on what the pupils already know and understand, and provide (in lessons) appropriate challenge to enable pupils to take the next step in their learning
(paras 8,9)
- Increasing the knowledge and understanding of key subject co-ordinators in order that they may take a lead in raising standards
(paras 44,63,70)
- Using assessment information to plan lessons
(paras 36,37,61,68,73,78)

KEY ISSUE 2

Improve the quality of teachers' marking by:

- Ensuring that all work is marked fairly and accurately
(paras 19,61,62,63)
- Involving the pupils in the marking process
(paras 19,62)
- Making sure that the pupils know what they have to do to improve their work
(paras 19,40,62)

KEY ISSUE 3

Create a more effective partnership between the school and parents by:

- Providing good quality end of year reports detailing what pupils have learnt and how they can improve their work
(paras 40)
- Emphasising the importance of regular attendance at school
(paras 34,40)
- Monitoring pupils who take too much time off of school for no good reason and working with parents to reduce the amount
(paras 14,40)
- Continuing to offer parents every opportunity to enter into the life of the school
(paras 39)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own, and others, views and beliefs
(paras 12,30,32)
- Review the timetable to ensure that lessons are not too long
(paras 18,26,61)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

42

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	13	14	5	0	0
Percentage	0	17	31	33	12	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. Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	158
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	42

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	42

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for 2001, which is the most recent year for which national comparative data is available.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of <i>Key Stage 1</i> for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	12	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	6	10
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	15	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63	67	83
	National	84	86	90

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	10	9
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	15	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63	83	83
	National	85	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 <i>Key Stage 2</i> for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	15
	Girls	7	8	9
	Total	19	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61	68	78
	National	75	73	86

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	7	7	9
	Total	18	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43	48	55
	National	73	74	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	155	1	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background	2		
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

The school does not have a nursery	
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Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	457,116
Total expenditure	439,979
Expenditure per pupil	2365
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,105
Balance carried forward to next year	39,242

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.4

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

33%

Number of questionnaires sent out

158

Number of questionnaires returned

52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	43	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	32	58	4	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	42	19	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	49	10	4	0
The teaching is good.	42	48	2	2	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	52	8	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	29	2	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	38	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	27	51	10	0	12
The school is well led and managed.	37	41	4	0	18
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	44	4	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	29	33	12	12

(figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding)

Other issues raised by parents

Many parents felt that they could not comment on how well the school was led and managed as there have been several changes of headteacher over the last two years.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

50. Provision for children in the *Foundation Stage* (the reception class) is good. The children have recently had the benefit of an additional part time teacher to support their learning and this has been effective. When they enter school, in the academic year in which they are five, a significant number of children have had no pre-school experience, so they join the reception class with knowledge and skills that are well below those normally found. The quality of teaching in all areas of learning is good and the children make good progress towards the *Early Learning Goals*, although many are unlikely to achieve all of them by the time they enter Year 1. There are currently fourteen children in the class, eight of whom attend part time only.
51. The staff have good procedures for introducing the children to school, and work closely with the local pre-school so that the children transferring from there can settle quickly. Other children are offered similar opportunities. Home visits are arranged and sessions in the classroom for all pupils mean that when all of the children begin school they are familiar with the room and the staff. Teachers encourage parents to take a full part in this introduction process and value the information they bring to school regarding their children.
52. Planning in the reception class is good, covering all areas of learning thoroughly. Daily plans are drawn up and modified using the assessments of children's' progress that are made each day. This results in activities and tasks being well matched to the needs of individual children. For example, in a lesson on shapes, less able pupils were encouraged to identify various shapes, whilst more able pupils were expected to describe them. Children with special educational needs are well supported and are fully included in the tasks and activities. The staff in the reception class work well together and have a very good relationship with the children. However, there is a reliance on printed worksheets and the children spend too much time colouring in instead of recording for themselves.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. Good emphasis is given to children's' development in this area, because many children enter school having no pre-school experience. The children quickly learn to play with each other and how to behave appropriately. When sitting together, the children are able to take turns and when playing, they can share well. The children are fully involved in their lessons. They are able to talk about what they are learning as lesson objectives are written on pieces of card, shared with the class and put into a box when the children think they have achieved the objective. The class really enjoys this activity and it promotes their feeling of self-worth effectively. They become increasingly confident and develop good relationships within the class, both with the staff and each other. Many of the children have a limited attention span and cannot sit for appropriate lengths of time. The teachers are aware of this and activities are planned in short bursts. However, much of the work is adult directed with limited opportunities for the children to follow their own ideas of what they would like to do.

Communication, language and literacy

54. The provision for this area of learning is good and children are encouraged to become readers and writers, whilst learning to talk confidently and listen attentively. Through well planned activities, such as arranging a baker to visit the class to talk about different types of bread, the children are able to learn new words, such as “squidgy” to describe how different loaves feel. The children learn about the sounds words begin with and can use these to begin to spell simple words. Some of the children begin to write legible sentences by the time they go into Year 1. Most of the children are able to attempt to write their own name correctly with neatly formed letters. There is a wide range of books for the children to read, and they are encouraged to take books home to share. By the time they leave the reception class, all of the children are able to use books appropriately and some are beginning to read confidently. The children are encouraged to use the class role play area to make up their own stories and act out their experiences. At the time of the inspection this was a bakers shop that linked effectively to the children's' experience of talking to the baker.

Mathematical development

55. The provision for mathematical development is good and some of the children count confidently to ten, although most count to five, correctly matching one to one. Teachers use number rhymes to support the children in counting, both forwards and backwards. The children learn the names of shapes and are able to identify the four basic ones. During a mathematical session, more able children were able to describe the properties of these shapes, whilst less able children were well supported so that they could remember the names of square, circle, rectangle and triangle. The children also experience practical mathematics through activities such as ordering dinosaurs, so they learn about bigger or smaller than. Teachers expect all pupils to join in the activities, although there is an over reliance of worksheets instead of the expectation that children will record their mathematical findings for themselves.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed through an appropriate range of topics. The children have access to three computers in the classroom and they are becoming very confident when using the mouse to access the appropriate software for their age. The children enjoy talking about the programs and showing adults what they can do. The small but practical outside area gives the children opportunities to plant seeds and watch them grow. The children have access to a range of building apparatus and they are able to construct models confidently. Through topics on dinosaurs, for example, the children learn about history and their place in the world.

Physical development

57. The children are learning to dress themselves and are keen to show this skill when changing for physical activity. They are able to move to music with confidence and can suggest how to demonstrate falling leaves when dancing to autumn music. When using the outside area the children have access to a small climbing frame and all are confident when moving around. Some of the children have well developed cutting skills, but a

significant minority find cutting out difficult. All of the children can hold a pencil properly and they are learning to form letters correctly.

Creative development

58. There are many opportunities for the children to experiment with paint and various creative materials. The children have enjoyed painting pictures of themselves and creating a large hall display of a hedgehog. They are able to use their imaginations when working in the role play area and they make up their own stories. The children sing enthusiastically and, although their knowledge of a range of songs is limited, rhymes are used well to support learning in mathematics by encouraging counting forwards and backwards.

ENGLISH

59. Standards in English are lower than those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' results in national tests in 2002 were well below average, both at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. Results at the end of Year 6, however, were below those similar schools. Pupils attained average results in reading tests, and standards in reading during the inspection were also judged to be average. These findings match the judgements from the last inspection. During Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a suitable range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and their phonic skills are average. Teachers provide good role models for expressive reading. Some pupils in Year 6 read with fluency and expression, but most need great encouragement to do so. In general, attitudes to reading are satisfactory, but pupils lack real enthusiasm when talking about the books they have read.
60. Standards of work seen are well below average in Year 2. On starting school, pupils' attainment levels in language and literacy are well below average. During Key Stage 1, appropriate attention is given to the development of basic literacy skills. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has enabled focused concentration on spelling and grammar and standards are improving in these aspects. In lessons observed during the inspection, teachers matched work well to the various ability groups in the class and this meant that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, made good progress. Support for the lower attaining pupils in the class was particularly good and learning support assistants contributed well to pupils' good rates of progress. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
61. Standards of work seen in Year 6 are well below average. Pupils do not build successfully on the levels attained by the end of Year 2 and, therefore, their achievements are unsatisfactory. This judgement was also made at the time of the last inspection. The school has identified that the weakest area of pupils' work is writing, but attention given to this has been minimal. For instance, when teachers mark pupils' work, they do not consistently make comments on how pupils can improve their writing. Often, work is marked with a single comment such as "excellent work", when it contains numerous errors. Moreover, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been carried out, but not evaluated in terms of the impact that it is having on learning in lessons. Because many pupils' literacy skills are weak, and some have poor levels of concentration, the long lessons that are timetabled in Key Stage 2 are inappropriate and sometimes result in pupils' behaviour deteriorating. Teachers do not always concentrate on what it is that they want pupils to learn, but plan their lessons around the activity that pupils will tackle. Insufficient use is currently made of information about what pupils know and can do as the starting point for lesson planning. Some year groups in Key Stage 2 have also been affected by

many changes of teacher, which has affected their rates of progress from one year to the next. Pupils in Year 5 needed particular support in developing good learning skills as result of a disrupted time in their previous class. In a very good lesson observed in this year group, the teacher's management skills and very clear expectations of what pupils would achieve by the end of the lesson encouraged them to concentrate well and make very good progress. The teacher made good use of additional adult support and short, varied activities to keep pupils interested. At the end of the plenary, the teacher gave a short summary of what had gone well during the lesson and made clear statements of how well pupils had attained and what they needed to develop further.

62. Throughout the school, the weakest aspect of pupils' written work is the development of legible, cursive handwriting. The school has adopted a commercial scheme, but so far this has not been well implemented. There are currently perceived problems with resource books for handwriting, but the major reason that pupils' work is so untidy is that, in many lessons, teachers do not set high enough expectations about how work should be presented. In marked work, very few comments are made about the quality of presentation, and the work of higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 contained no comments about the absence of cursive script. In some classes there are examples of guidance for presentation at the start of language books, but this is neither consistent throughout the school, nor is the guidance consistently applied in lessons. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 have little idea of what is expected in terms of presentation to attain the expected levels in their written work. There is also little understanding of how practised, cursive writing can aid spelling. In general, the presentation of work throughout the school is untidy, inconsistent and therefore unsatisfactory.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Although areas for development have been identified through analysis of past test results, developments have so far been slow. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but there has been too little emphasis on improving teaching and raising standards. Teaching is inconsistent between year groups, and this has not been identified through careful monitoring of English. The curriculum has been improved, largely as a result of national changes, but it has not been evaluated to ensure that it is relevant to pupils. The co-ordinator has supported colleagues in planning lessons, but does not yet have a clear enough understanding of the standards that pupils are currently attaining, where new learning needs to be encouraged, and levels that pupils should be aiming for in their work. Marking has not been addressed as an important and valuable way of improving pupils' work. Resource issues have been managed well enough and the current number and quality of resources are adequate. Developments in the subject are not yet clearly focused on the priorities identified. Local authority support for the co-ordinator did not target the school's main development priority of writing, so time and effort have been given to less important areas of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator is aware of major strengths and weaknesses within the provision, but has not had the necessary guidance and training to form an overall plan of action for developments. There has been unsatisfactory improvement in the role of the co-ordinator since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

64. In the 2002 national test, pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were below average when compared to schools nationally and broadly in line with similar schools. Results for pupils in Year 2 were similar. This shows a steady improvement over the past two years with pupils achieving soundly when taking into consideration the low levels of knowledge with which they enter school. Achievement is good over time at Key Stage 1 and broadly satisfactory at Key Stage 2 based on

the pupils' prior attainment. Standards are quite similar to those reported at the last inspection with a little improvement at Key Stage 1.

65. The work seen in Key Stage 1 reflects the national test results. Pupils are able to use money appropriately, adding coin of different value correctly. They carry out simple two-digit subtraction and addition, although a significant number of pupils need practical support for this. A significant proportion are still quite slow at adding two single digits together and need to count on with their fingers. They can round to the nearest ten. They recognise right angles and understand simple fractions such as a half and a quarter. They can double and halve numbers, tell the time using half and quarter past and they recognise odd and even numbers. They are becoming familiar with the names of two- and three-dimensional shapes and their properties.
66. By the end of Year 6, pupils have some understanding of percentage, although their calculations are not always accurate. The work seen reflects the test results. Pupils understand the 24-hour clock. They know, understand and can apply the terms mode, median and mean. They can add and subtract four digit numbers and convert improper fractions to mixed numbers. They order decimals with reasonable accuracy. A small number of pupils have difficulties when converting kilograms to grams. Most know how to calculate long multiplication but several pupils have not yet fully committed multiplication table knowledge to memory which makes some of their working inaccurate or hinders their speed in calculation. Their presentation skills are not as good as they might be and pupils are uneconomical when setting out work and they can be untidy. They do not consistently use rulers to draw lines. Graphical representation can be incomplete, for example missing out titles or naming the axes.
67. In the main, the mathematics curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements but there are too few opportunities for the pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in order to solve problems or carry out investigations. Overall, the numeracy strategy is taught satisfactorily. Occasionally, the mental starter is too short. Some good use was observed of mathematics being used and developed in other subjects, for example in science and information and communication technology, but these opportunities were limited.
68. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 it ranged from satisfactory to unsatisfactory and in Key Stage 2 from very good to satisfactory. Strengths in the best teaching include well planned lessons with clear attention given to pupils' different prior attainment, clear expectations, good discussion of strategies being used to work out a calculation, and imaginative mental starters to lessons using a range of techniques. Good use was made in some lessons of the overhead projector, drawing pupils' attention to criteria for successful work and forming the basis for good quality discussion. Where teaching was less successful, pupils were given inappropriate worksheets, which they could not read, and these hindered progress. Insufficient use was made of mathematical charts such as number lines or hundred squares to help pupils understand the concepts better. On occasion, there was a lack of teacher knowledge of the aspect being taught which resulted in misconceptions.
69. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and enjoy their work. They concentrate on their activities but a minority of pupils in each class find it difficult to concentrate when the teacher is explaining the work to the whole class. These are often the pupils who have special educational needs but the teachers or teaching assistants work well with them in small group settings which helps to re-focus them.
70. The co-ordinator manages the subject soundly. She has written a satisfactory policy with suitable aims. She appreciates that further development is needed in the subject as there

is currently little monitoring of the teaching of mathematics. There are also insufficient exemplars of different levels of work so that staff are able to identify which level each pupil is working at. There is an appropriate number of good quality resources to support pupils' learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

71. In the 2002 national tests, pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were well below average compared to schools nationally, and compared to schools of a similar type. Results over the past few years have been comparable although, when compared to similar schools, results are improving slightly. These standards were reflected in the work seen during the inspection. Many pupils are working at the expected level but few attain the higher standards that are normally seen in schools. Overall, this represents satisfactory achievement during Key Stage 2 for the pupils because they enter school with well below average knowledge and skills, and many have difficulty retaining facts.
72. There are no national tests for pupils in Year 2 and teachers make their own assessments of pupils' learning. These assessments show that pupils attain standards that are below those found nationally, but broadly in line with the attainment of pupils in similar schools. Again, there are few pupils who attain the higher standards overall. These results are reflected in the work seen and, although pupils work at the expected average level, few are able to demonstrate more advanced skills and knowledge. Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory during Key Stage 1.
73. The teaching of science is satisfactory overall. Curriculum coverage is well planned with the school's scheme of work being effectively supplemented with national guidance. However, pupils in Key Stage 2 sometimes repeat work that they have carried out in Key Stage 1. Teachers share the learning intentions for the lessons with pupils and, in the best lessons, these learning intentions are revisited at the end of the lesson to ensure that the pupils know what they have achieved. In one particularly good lesson on buoyancy, the teacher gave very clear and careful explanations about balanced forces. The pupils were able to make very good progress in this lesson because the teacher had very good subject knowledge and had high expectations for recording work. The lesson moved on at a good pace and the pupils got a lot done. In another good lesson, work was based on what the pupils had already experienced, and activities were well matched to past knowledge. In this lesson, the pupils were able to make an electric circuit and learnt what caused a circuit to break. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection, but in less effective lessons the pace was slower and the pupils became a little restless. In both key stages, pupils are able to carry out investigations and experiments and they are beginning to use appropriate scientific vocabulary. The main weakness in the teaching of science is marking. Work is often generously marked as very good, or excellent, when it is clearly not, and pupils are not given sufficient advice on how to improve their work and so attain higher standards.
74. Pupils work well during science lessons, behaviour is generally good and pupils get a lot done. This was especially evident during a Year 6 lesson when, in a short space of time, the pupils were able to carry out an investigation and record it, drawing conclusions after testing their own predictions. Pupils were very involved in their work and talked

animatedly about their findings. In general, all pupils are happy to work together in mixed groups and support each other with ideas and suggestions. Work is neat and well presented, especially towards the end of Key Stage 2. The school has worked closely with the local secondary school to ensure consistency in recording of scientific experiments. The pupils respond positively to this and consequently take a pride in their work.

75. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The science co-ordinator is very new in post and has worked hard to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She has clear plans for the development of science and has carried out an audit on the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. However, in the five weeks since taking up the post, there has been too little time to have an impact on standards. Resources for learning are adequate. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Although standards have not risen significantly there has been more time allocated to science and in the two years since the last inspection, some improvement has been seen.

ART AND DESIGN

76. In the work seen, standards in art were generally below expectations for the ages of the pupils. Some work is good, such as the development of paintings and collages inspired by a famous painting of a dragon, in the National Gallery. Some Year 5 paintings show good use of colour and shape. Overall, however, skills are not developed appropriately over time and so many pupils achieve less than they could and do not reach the nationally expected standard. Observational drawing is weak. For example, older pupils rarely make use of pencils of varying hardness or use shading, and often draw simplistic shapes that bear little relationship to what they are actually observing. Simple features, such as the location of the eyes in the face, are sometimes achieved more successfully by younger pupils than older ones. This indicates that knowledge and skills are not being reinforced and extended from year to year.
77. A good feature in one lesson seen was that Year 6 pupils were encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work, and then use their findings to make improvements. This helped pupils to gain a better understanding of perspective and how colour can be used to give a sense of depth. Year 4 pupils were helped by the good teamwork of the teacher and teaching assistant, which enabled them to focus on different aspects of the process of print-making. A weakness was in the shortage of some resources for this art topic.
78. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory and enthusiastic, but has not been successful in evaluating standards, identifying where improvement is needed and taking effective action. Although timetables are scrutinised, planning is not. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to support curriculum development. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in design and technology that are similar to those expected. There was insufficient evidence to make an accurate judgement to compare standards in Year 6 with the unsatisfactory judgement made previously. Few of the completed models were available. However, there is now a clear outline of themes and good involvement of the community in sharing their expertise. For example visitors include a vehicle designer, an architect, a brick

factory worker for the work on homes and a dentist when healthy snacks are being discussed. The part-time teacher/co-ordinator is well qualified, very well informed and very enthusiastic. She has bought in a good range of materials and tools for the making process and has clear intentions for the further development of the subject.

80. By Year 2, pupils can make a design for Incy Wincy Spider by making the spider out of pipe cleaners and egg cartons and, using doweling, make a simple winding mechanism to make the spider climb up the spout. They use construction kits to make bases that will stand up. They make clay houses from their own simple designs greetings cards with a moving part pulled with a lever. They design a coat for Joseph made out of different materials. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
81. By Year 6 pupils can design and make their own sandwiches. They make slippers out of different materials and make a torch design. They make their own biscuits and study packaging. They make and design their own musical instruments and shelters. However, whilst photographs of some of these were available, there was little concrete evidence to judge the overall quality of the work.
82. The design work seen in Key Stage 2 lacked precision, was often drawn free hand without adequate labelling and was rather scrappy in appearance. It did not give enough detail of how the product was to be made. Written evaluations of work lack incisiveness and are described in broad terms. For example, in one evaluation of improving their vehicle axle, pupils had typically written 'make a bigger one, make it not so messy'.
83. Only two lessons could be observed, both at Key Stage 2. In one of the two lessons observed in Key Stage 2 the teaching was unsatisfactory because the learning intention was unclear. Pupils made unsatisfactory progress, despite their keenness and good behaviour. Their attainment was well below expectations. Pupils had few ideas how to make musical instruments and their designs had very little labelling. In the other lesson, the teaching was satisfactory. Work was at an appropriate level as pupils designed and made sandwiches and some used information and communication technology effectively to list the tools they would require and the ingredients.
84. Design and technology is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has organised visitors into school to enhance the pupils' learning and this results in pupils being keen and eager to learn. There are sufficient resources for design and technology. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

85. Pupils' attainment in the subject is similar to that at the last inspection and meets expectations for their ages. Whilst a limited number of lessons was observed in both key stages, evidence was also obtained from the previous year's work, as well as examining current work. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement is good.
86. Pupils in Year 2 know that there are different forms of travel, even to get to the same place. They understand that there are differences in climate across the world that affect people's lifestyles and they make a particular study of homes in this regard. They have studied the local village and can plot on a map a simple route from home to school. They understand the concept

of a simple key. Pupils make suggestions about improving their village with a particular reference to parking.

87. Pupils in Year 6 understand the concept of the water cycle. They know that a river's features may change from source to the sea and they can name some of the features such as meander. Most can use six-figure grid references accurately. They are becoming environmentally aware by learning about pollution. They are becoming familiar with contours and can calculate height between contours with a good degree of accuracy. They can read a simple contour map and describe a short journey indicating which parts of the route are uphill, downhill or on the level. They use their knowledge of maps to write out imaginary planning applications for a caravan park or a public house making out their reasons for selecting the spot on their maps. They know that life in other parts of the world, such as in their detailed study of an Indian village, is much different to their own.
88. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and at Key Stage 2 good. It is good overall. Lessons are often imaginative enabling pupils to make good progress overall. As a result pupils enjoy their work. They work together co-operatively in groups and discuss well together, although often with a limited range of spoken vocabulary. Leadership of the subject is sound and there is a satisfactory range of resources. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

HISTORY

89. In a lesson observed in Year 1, pupils attained standards that were above expectations. The main strength of the lesson was the very good use of available resources to interest and stimulate pupils. Pupils looked at household objects from long ago and thought carefully about how time had changed the common things we use at home. They talked about the how vacuum cleaners have replaced rug beaters and washing machines are used instead of washing dollies. It was very evident that pupils had made good progress in previous lessons and they had good recall of names of many household items. Past work of pupils in Year 2 does not show evidence of overall high standards, and inspection findings are that attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with expectations and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
90. By the end of Year 6, standards of work are below expected levels because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn in history throughout the key stage. Little evidence could be gained from pupils' past work about standards in history, and judgements are made as result of one observed lesson and discussions with pupils. Pupils were able to discuss the differences in how Victorian children spent their spare time and how we do today. In this lesson there were few interesting resources and pupils were less interested in their work. In creating posters, handwriting was untidy and spelling weak. There were no clear expectations set by the teacher in terms of overall presentation. Standards attained were broadly average and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory.
91. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to promote literacy skills through history work and this is positive. However, a clearly planned strategy to ensure that history can be presented in an exciting and stimulating way to develop pupils' literacy skills has yet to be established. The subject has not received priority attention in recent years and lacks the sparkle necessary to engage and interest pupils, and enable the subject to be used as a medium for the development of pupils' writing.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92. In the work seen in information and communication technology, standards were broadly in line with expectations for the ages of the pupils. For example, Year 1 pupils have a reasonable understanding of computers' limitations and uses, and have satisfactory mouse control. Older pupils, who have carefully controlled access to the internet, understand the need for caution, both in personal terms and in order to protect against computer viruses. In Year 6, pupils have inserted files to combine text and graphics, and are starting to use hyperlinks effectively. Throughout the school, pupils are often unsure of the correct vocabulary for the subject. Some older pupils, for instance, are hesitant about using simple terms such as *enter*, *space bar* and *cursor*. This makes it harder for pupils to explain what they are doing or to ask how to improve their skills. Most pupils achieve well in relation to their previous experiences and attainment. In some classes, however, they achieve less than they could because they do not use information and communication technology frequently enough to support learning across the curriculum. Scrutiny of work from the previous year provided very few examples of the use of information and communication technology. This is partly because work was not printed and kept, either in a subject file or within the recorded work for other subjects.
93. The sound curriculum is designed to help teachers plan lessons that develop knowledge and skills systematically. The effectiveness of the good scheme of work is reduced somewhat by the missed opportunities to plan the use of information and communication technology in other subjects. A very recent, good development is the expectation that teachers will in future include links to information and communication technology when planning in all subjects. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory, but not all teachers are using them appropriately, and the information gathered is not used as well as it could be.
94. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. This is due to a number of factors, the most important being good leadership of the subject and increased teacher expertise and confidence. The school has invested wisely in resources, which are now good. The school is fully networked and makes efficient use of shared printers and software. Plans for further development are very good. The school seeks best value, both in educational and financial terms. The staff have received useful training, and support continues. For example, an adviser is visiting the school soon to help teachers plan for information and communication technology across the curriculum. This is a good example of how the leadership of the subject accurately identifies a weakness and then takes action to bring about improvement.

MUSIC

95. Much improvement has been made in the provision for the subject since the last inspection when pupils' attainment at Key Stage 2 was described as below expectations and teaching was unsatisfactory. This is because of the imaginative approach adopted by the music co-ordinator to increase teachers' confidence in the subject by the employment of a music adviser. This initiative has built up the music curriculum and trained teachers to teach the subject throughout the school through observing demonstration lessons and in turn being observed. The retention of the adviser on a part-time basis is ensuring continued oversight of developments. However, not least in the subject's higher profile are the skill and enthusiasm of the music co-ordinator who has very good musical expertise and is helping to ensure that, by Year 6, attainment is now meeting expectations. Pupils' achievements in both key stages are satisfactory.

96. Pupils enjoy music lessons and are well behaved. They sing with and listen attentively, showing much interest. They access all the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for the subject including compositional work on the computer.
97. By the end of Year 2 pupils can pick out high and low sounds accurately. They sing with enjoyment and generally in tune, particularly enjoying action songs. Before and after assembly, along with other pupils, they listen attentively to the music. By Year 6, pupils remember the musical elements such as pitch, timbre and texture in musical composition. They can pick out a simple musical structure. They know that sad music is usually slow and low pitched. Pupils work together co-operatively in group composition and can combine with others to form a simple musical structure. They know the correct terms for loud and soft.
98. The teaching observed was satisfactory overall but it was sometimes good, particularly so where the teacher's subject knowledge was very good. This lesson included the playing of an instrument to exemplify the lesson content, enthraling the pupils in doing so.
99. The leadership and management of music are good. The co-ordinator has made good efforts to enthuse pupils to learn a musical instrument but the cost of this provision has been prohibitive to most families and has not taken off as a consequence. The school provides recorder tuition as an extra-curricular activity and 12 pupils are learning this instrument. These pupils accompany the singing in assembly on occasion. Resources for the subject are satisfactory with quite a good range but with some lack of instruments from other countries. The co-ordinator has further ambition for the subject and is actively seeking alternative ways to give pupils access to instrumental tuition.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

100. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory, and the majority of them attain standards that are in line with the national expectation in this subject. This is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection.
101. In discussion with pupils in Year 1, it is clear that they understand the importance of warming up their muscles before engaging in rigorous physical activity. Pupils in Year 2 have developing gymnastic skills and their overall levels of co-ordination are satisfactory. They are sensible in preparing the hall for lessons, as result of the teachers' very clear expectations regarding health and safety. Pupils in Year 6 are developing a suitable understanding of the importance of obeying rules in team games. Standards in team games are enhanced for pupils by their involvement in a suitable range of extra-curricular activities, some of which involve helpers from the local community. The school is aware of those pupils with particular sporting talent and teachers involve these pupils in demonstrating good techniques and skills during lessons. Good attitudes to sporting successes are encouraged through the celebration of pupils' achievements outside of school. Other pupils are aware and proud of those pupils who have been chosen for local football teams for example. As yet, however, there are few opportunities for pupils to play in competitive matches against other schools, which means that not all pupils' developing skills are encouraged through the desire to succeed in team efforts. The school already has plans to develop this area of the curriculum.
102. Not enough lessons were seen during inspection to judge the overall quality of teaching. In the two lessons seen, teachers had good subject knowledge and because of their careful planning,

lesson organisation was effective. In both lessons, all pupils were fully involved, had a clear understanding of the learning intention, talked about what they had learned previously and could say how they had improved in the lesson. Pupils enjoyed their work and applied themselves with enthusiasm and vigour.

103. The curriculum is broad, in that it contains all the required elements. Suitable use has been made of national guidance and there is a good range of resources to support learning. The school has paid good attention to the specific needs of pupils in providing appropriate resources and this means that all pupils are involved in all activities, regardless of their learning or physical needs. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop swimming skills and the majority surpass expected distances by the end of Year 6. The co-ordinator is new to the role, but has capitalised and built on the developments made by the previous co-ordinator. She provides the subject with suitable leadership and management and has an appropriate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses that exist.