

INSPECTION REPORT

RANELAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124645

Headteacher: Mrs S Bowditch

Lead inspector: Mr N Sherman

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th December 2003

Inspection number: 257268

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Ranelagh Road Ipswich
Postcode:	IP2 0AN
Telephone number:	01473 251608
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	28 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ranelagh Primary School is situated close to the city centre of Ipswich. It provides education for pupils aged 3 – 11, although the children in the nursery attend mornings only. 24 per cent of the pupils are from different ethnic backgrounds, the largest group of which is the Bangladeshi community. The school has a higher than average number of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Of the pupils on roll, 28 per cent have special educational needs, a figure that is above average. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above average. The school is working in an environment where there is a high level of social difficulty. Attainment on entry is very poor.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16493	Mr N Sherman	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, English as an additional language.
14756	Mr J Lovell	Lay inspector	
10228	Mrs S Russam	Team inspector	English, religious education, history, geography, special educational needs.
32136	Mrs L Brookes	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, science, music, physical education.

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	21
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Ranelagh Primary School is a **good** school and provides pupils with an effective quality of education. By the time they leave at the age of 11, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science, and achievement in art and design is very good. Teaching is good overall, and a high percentage of very good teaching is evident at Key Stage 2. This contributes to pupils having very good attitudes to learning. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. The school is well led and managed, and the headteacher provides sensitive yet determined leadership. The school provides good value for money.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides effective leadership and management that is characterised by a strong team ethic that is focused on overcoming the barriers some pupils have to their learning.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and the children are given a good start to their education.
- By the time they leave the school, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and art and design.
- Teaching is good overall and frequently very good in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and there is a high level of racial harmony.
- Pupils are suitably cared for by all staff, who have a good understanding of the pupils' personal and academic needs.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided outside the school day to extend and enrich pupils' learning.
- Ways to extend pupils' literacy skills through other subjects need to be extended.
- Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' day-to-day learning.

The school has made good progress since its previous inspection. National Curriculum test results have improved at a greater rate than that seen nationally. Determined action by the headteacher, staff and governors on the key issues identified in the previous report has brought about constructive improvements in other aspects of the school's work. The school, under the sensitive yet effective leadership and management of the headteacher, is well placed to improve still further.

Standards Achieved

Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is **satisfactory**, and **good** in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2. While standards are below average by the time pupils leave the school, they achieve well in English, mathematics and science.

The children commence nursery with well below average levels of attainment, particularly in their general language and literacy skills. Although children achieve well, by the time they enter Year 1, standards are still well below the expected levels.

By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards that are well below expectations in English, mathematics and science. Overall achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, although the progress pupils make in speaking and listening is good. Pupils reach higher than expected standards in art and design, and achievement is very good.

By the end of Year 6, while standards in English, mathematics and science are below the national average, pupils achieve well. Pupils make good progress in the development of their

basic skills. The school has increasingly placed strong emphasis on developing the pupils' confidence in using and applying their literacy and numeracy skills. Standards in art and design are above expectations and pupils achieve very well in this subject. By the age of eleven, pupils reach expected standards in information and communication technology and religious education.

Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils as they move through the school. The pupils receive effective support and guidance in lessons. Those who are learning to become more confident in their use of spoken and written English make good progress.

Pupils' personal development is good. The school places a high value on allowing the pupils to have a say in matters that interest them on a day-by-day basis. Provision for spiritual, social and moral development is good overall. The school makes highly effective use of art and design to extend the pupils' understanding of the world around them. Attendance rates are in line with the national figure. However, despite the school's better efforts to stress the importance of getting to school on time in the minds of parents, a small but significant number of pupils are frequently late arriving in school.

Standards achieved at the end of Year 6

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	E	D	B
Mathematics	C	E	E	E
Science	B	E	D	B

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
 Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **good**. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught well. Teaching is **good** across the school overall, although there is some variation. At Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory. Very good teaching is more frequent at Key Stage 2 and as a result, the overall pace of pupils' learning is better. In all classes, strong emphasis is placed on developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills. This has a positive impact on those pupils in particular whose first language is not English. Procedures to assess the pupils' personal and academic progress are good.

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. However, while the school site does not make it easy to provide additional learning opportunities, the range of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size is too limited. Pupils are provided with a high degree of care and all staff have a good understanding of the pupils as individuals. Links with parents are satisfactory, as they are with the local community.

Leadership and management

The school is **effectively led and managed**. The headteacher has an astute understanding of the school's strengths and has established a clear agenda for the school's continued development, which is sharply focused on raising standards. A hard-working and dedicated staff ably supports her. All work hard to provide pupils with a learning environment and day-to-day experiences that go some way towards compensating those pupils who experience difficulties in their daily lives. Day-to-day management of the school, its resources and the school budget are good. The role of the governors is much improved since the previous inspection and they are also effective in how they undertake their responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents

Parents hold the school in high regard. They have very few areas of concern, although a small minority expressed the view that too few opportunities are provided for their children to participate in competitive sports.

Pupils

The pupils believe that the quality of their education has much improved in recent times. They argue that the staff are friendly and that they are treated with courtesy and respect. Pupils comment positively about the work the school does to promote racial harmony.

Improvements Needed

- Explore ways of complementing pupils' learning over and beyond the normal curriculum.
- Continue to develop ways of promoting pupils' literacy through other subjects.
- Make greater use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The pupils' achievement is **good**. Overall, standards in English, mathematics and science are **below average** by the time they leave the school. In art and design, standards are **above average** and pupils achieve very well in this subject.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 achieve well.
- By the end of Years 1 and 2, standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science.
- By the time pupils leave the school standards are below average in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in art and design are above the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those whose main language is not English make good progress as they move through the school.
- National Curriculum test data indicates that girls achieve less well than boys in mathematics at Key Stage 2.

Commentary

The Foundation Stage

1. The children's attainment when they first start in the nursery class is extremely low, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills and personal, social and emotional development. Strategies such as visits to each of the children's homes by the teacher enables her quickly to develop a clear picture of what activities should be planned to support their learning. A strong emphasis is placed on developing the children's basic skills and on boosting their confidence in working with and relating to one another. Despite the good teaching the children receive, by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment in all areas related to the Early Learning Goals is still well below average. Nonetheless, overall achievement is good when one considers the children's very low level of ability when they first start at the school.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2 (13.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.8 (11.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.7 (13.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets refer to the previous year

2. The 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national test results indicate that the pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was well below national expectations, and in line with national expectations in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is well above average in writing and average in reading. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is well below average. The picture at Key Stage 1 is one of continuing improvement and this reflects the school's efforts to raise pupils' skills in English and mathematics. However, while the 2003 results were a good improvement on those of 2002 for mathematics, more rapid improvements in this subject are proving more difficult for the school to secure.
3. The inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the current group of Year 2 pupils is well below average in English, mathematics and science. In English, the main difficulty pupils experience is in making more sustained progress in writing. In speaking and listening, pupils make good progress. This reflects the very good attention paid by teachers to promoting this aspect of the pupils' language development. Overall, given their low attainment when pupils first enter the school, their overall achievement is satisfactory. Progress in information and communication technology and progress in religious education is good. Not enough evidence was collected during the inspection to make secure judgements about standards in history, design and technology, geography, or physical education. In art and design, pupils reach standards above expectations and their achievement is very good. Throughout the key stage, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those at different stages of learning English, make satisfactory progress.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (25.1)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	23.8 (24.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (26.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets refer to the previous year.

4. The results of the 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national tests indicate that pupils' attainment is below the national average in English and science. In mathematics, standards are well below average. Over the past few years, pupils have performed very well in the National Curriculum tests and the overall picture has been one of swifter improvement than that seen nationally. However, in mathematics the girls have performed less well than the boys in the national tests.
5. The findings of the inspection indicate that pupils attain standards that generally reflect the National Curriculum results. However, the school's continued efforts to raise pupils' achievements in mathematics are bringing about improvements, although the findings of the inspection indicate that standards are below average. Pupils make good progress as they move through each of the classes and their achievement in English, mathematics and science is good.
6. Achievement is very good in art and design and pupils attain standards that are higher than one would normally expect by the age of 11. Insufficient evidence was available to make a secure judgement about the standards pupils reach in design and technology,

history and physical education. In religious education pupils reach standards that are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In information and communication technology pupils reach standards in line with expectations. This marks a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below expectations. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and at the early stages of learning English, make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, although there are some shortcomings. The attitudes and behaviour of the older pupils are **very good**, and **good** in the younger pupils. Attendance is **satisfactory**, although the level of punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in lessons and other activities.
- Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are good.
- There is a high level of racial harmony.
- Pupils in Year 6 carry out a range of responsibilities sensibly and with maturity.
- A significant number of pupils arrive late.

Commentary

7. Overall, the quality of pupils' attitudes, values and other personal attributes is very similar to that found during the last inspection. Under the headteacher's leadership, the school continues to provide a positive and caring environment in which the establishment of good relationships is seen to be of fundamental importance. Staff set pupils good examples by the way in which they work together and support each other. The manner in which the school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is similar to the last inspection.
8. The pupils' views of the school are very positive. They appreciate the friendly and supportive treatment that they receive from their teachers. They enjoy all of their experiences in school. In general, pupils work conscientiously and seek to do their best. The behaviour of most pupils is always good, and nearly always very good amongst the older children. This is particularly true when the teaching is stimulating and fully engages the pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants are always consistent in the way they apply the school's agreed procedures if pupils do misbehave. Relationships between pupils are good and they are co-operative and mutually supportive. They get on well together when at play, and incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare. There are high levels of racial harmony among the different ethnic groups. Pupils take on well the special tasks and responsibilities they are offered, such as looking after each other through the system of playground 'buddies.'
9. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Art and music contribute well to the pupils' appreciation of the world around them. The singing in infant assemblies is enthusiastic and joyful. The school provides pupils with good opportunities to reflect on faith, special places and their experiences in school. They are developing well their understanding of the value of friends and family. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. They develop a clear understanding of right and wrong through the example of all the adults in the school. Expectations, in the form of class rules, are

prominently displayed and the expected standards of behaviour are reinforced consistently. The ethos of care and consideration for others is evident throughout the school.

10. Provision for pupils' social development is good overall but has minor weaknesses. Pupils work together co-operatively and are offered many opportunities to do so in class. They are polite and helpful. They develop respect for others and their opinions, and a good understanding of today's moral and social issues. The school council makes an effective contribution to pupils' social development, and the views they voice are listened to and acted upon. However, the range of experiences outside lessons in which pupils can participate is limited. There are some visits and the residential experience at an outdoor centre for Year 6 pupils provides some scope for developing their understanding of the need to work effectively with others. Extra-curricular activities are limited and pupils only have opportunities to take part in 'friendly' competitive sports fixtures against other schools. The pupils' cultural development is provided for satisfactorily through religious education lessons, which include investigation of various faiths and cultures. Pupils have limited opportunities to visit relevant places of interest related to their own, and others' heritage and religions.

Attendance

11. Overall, attendance is broadly in line with the national average and shows an improvement on that found at the time of the last inspection. Although levels of unauthorised absence are higher than those found nationally, they show a significant reduction from those found at the time of the last inspection. Levels of punctuality are unsatisfactory, although both these and levels of attendance are affected adversely by a small minority of pupils whose parents are not fully supportive of the school's efforts to secure regular attendance and good punctuality.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1%
National data	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.5%
National data	0.4%

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

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions in the past year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good quality of education** for the pupils. Teaching and learning are **good** overall although there is some variation. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Provision for extra-curricular activities is too limited for a school of this size. The school provides a **good** standard of care for all pupils. Links with parents and the local and wider community are **satisfactory**.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The **quality of teaching is good** overall, although there is some variation. Teaching is of a higher quality at Key Stage 2. Assessment procedures have been developed well since the previous inspection. The information gained is used well to plan what pupils need to do next.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage allows the children good opportunities to learn through imaginative structured play.
- Pupils in all classes are provided with frequent opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills.
- At Key Stage 2, good use is made of the expertise and interest of teachers in teaching certain subjects.
- At Key Stage 1, expectations of what pupils formally record are not always sufficiently high.
- The skills of learning support assistants are used well by teachers in guiding the learning of pupils with different learning needs.
- Assessment information is used well to guide pupils' subsequent learning.
- Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in daily lessons.

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching is good overall and has significantly improved since the last inspection. The headteacher and staff have carefully thought through what are the most effective teaching styles for the pupils in the school and have successfully adopted those that appear to work best. In addition, the development of procedures for monitoring teaching and its impact on learning has brought about improvements in teaching that enable the pupils to make good progress as they move through each of the classes.
13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The teachers and support staff are very aware of the very low skills the children demonstrate when they first enter the school. The organisation of the classroom and the quality of the children's learning help to boost the children's early skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The teacher has a good understanding of the needs of young children. Classroom organisation is very much geared to allowing the children good scope for participating in imaginative structured play activities. These may include, for example, role-playing in the class shop. This helps to develop the children's early learning of how mathematics is to be seen and used in their everyday lives as well as their skills in playing and negotiating with others. The teacher works very effectively and in close co-operation with the two classroom assistants. Between them they build up a detailed profile of the children's learning needs. Subsequent learning is planned from the information gathered and this helps to ensure that children of different abilities are challenged and extended to the best of their ability.
14. At Key Stages 1 and 2, all teachers place strong emphasis on the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers, correctly, understand that a good number of the pupils lack confidence in speaking clearly and to a wider audience. Through careful and sensitive questioning, all pupils are given sufficient scope to explain their thinking or express their points of view on matters of interest. In many lessons seen during the inspection teachers allowed pupils one or two minutes to discuss with one another 'what might happen next' and then explain their reasoning to the rest of the class. Concluding parts of lessons are also used well in this respect, as pupils have to explain to the teacher what they have learned or enjoyed in a lesson or what difficulties they may have encountered. Such a teaching strategy has a positive impact on the learning of those whose main language is not English and boosts their confidence in using spoken language to a wider audience.

15. While the teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, not always enough is expected of the pupils in terms of what they formally record. In some lessons, such as religious education, pupils record very little of their learning. As a result, other subjects are not used sufficiently to promote the pupils' writing skills.
16. At Key Stage 2, a key strength of the teaching is the use to which the expertise and interest of individual co-ordinators is put. The music co-ordinator, for example, teaches music to the whole of Year 5 and 6 and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. A similar arrangement is in place for the teaching of art and design, which is often very good. In many classes, work planned for the pupils is often challenging and engaging. Teachers produce careful and detailed plans that highlight the structure of the lesson well and outline what work is to be given to the range of ability levels in the class. The pupils respond well to the high expectations that the teachers have of them and strive to produce work that is a good reflection of their particular skills and abilities.
17. In both key stages, the teaching of information and communication technology in the school's computer suite is good. The school has been successful in raising the level of the teachers' confidence in using computers to support pupils' learning. However, there are occasions when chances for using computers in day-to-day lessons are not exploited. As a result, pupils do not always get sufficient opportunities in other lessons to extend and consolidate the skills they are learning when they are taught in the computer suite.
18. Pupils with particular needs and abilities are supported well in their learning. Teachers' planning highlights what activities and strategies are to be used to support the pupils' day-to-day learning. These are often closely matched to the pupils' individual education plans. Those with specific educational needs are included in the full range of learning planned and this demonstrates the school's strong thrust towards inclusion. As a result, the pupils make good progress not only in their general academic achievement, but also in their confidence to strive to achieve their best in all that they attempt.
19. Assessment procedures and the use teachers make of them are good. Statutory requirements for assessment are fully met by the end of the reception class, Year 2 and Year 6. Further teacher assessments throughout the year and at the end of each year provide teachers with comprehensive information to inform their planning and target setting for all pupils. Assessment procedures are particularly effective in English and mathematics. The information helps the school to analyse how well pupils are achieving in relation to similar schools and national trends. Staff use assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. They talk to pupils about their work and use the information to decide where they need more help or where work needs to provide greater challenge. Most teachers mark pupils' work very thoroughly and include comments that help individuals to make further progress in their learning. The school's marking policy is helpful in this regard, but a minority of teachers do not mark pupils' work as thoroughly as others resulting in some pupils not being given the same degree of guidance as to how they may improve their work.
20. Pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve. They are involved in setting targets for themselves and assessing the progress they are making towards achieving them. Pupils who may need additional help are identified quickly and they are involved in discussions about how best to remedy their difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs are now beginning to make more significant contributions to their individual education plans; however, they have a better understanding of how well they are achieving in relation to lesson targets and find this more helpful when discussing their progress.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
	11 (31%)	14 (39%)	10 (28%)	1 (3%)		

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** range of learning opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage and a **satisfactory** range for other pupils. There is a very limited range of activities outside the formal curriculum, and extra-curricular provision is too limited. The overall range of learning resources and the quality of the school's accommodation is **satisfactory**, and **good** in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides appropriate coverage of all subjects in the curriculum and a suitable range of learning opportunities.
- The school's curriculum caters satisfactorily for pupils of all capabilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- Opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities are limited and therefore unsatisfactory.
- The accommodation and resources for pupils in the nursery/reception class are good.
- Outside play space is poor and unsuitable for developing some games skills and for playing competitive fixtures.
- The library is not readily accessible to children under seven.

Commentary

21. The curriculum provided is satisfactory and fulfils all statutory requirements. Sufficient time is allocated to all subjects, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have full and equal access to the curriculum. Whilst sufficient emphasis is given to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in English and mathematics lessons, not enough emphasis is yet given to developing these skills across the curriculum. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn new skills in information and communication technology, but the opportunities to develop these skills within the context of other subjects in day-to-day lessons within the classroom is sometimes limited.
22. Provision for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education is good. In all classes pupils have opportunities to discuss matters influencing their personal development through, for example, circle time and dedicated personal, social and health education lessons. The school's extra-curricular provision is unsatisfactory. The range of clubs is very limited and while it includes sports activities, pupils have insufficient opportunities to take part in competitive sports against other schools. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
23. The school is well staffed, and pupils are supported well by classroom assistants. The

accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage class is good and meets children's needs well. Overall, accommodation and resources are sufficient to enable the National Curriculum and religious education to be taught. Classrooms are bright and attractive and displays of pupils' work add much to the ambience of the school building. Since the last inspection a computer suite has been added. All classes at many points of the week use this. The design of the school is such that on occasions when pupils are moving about within the school they have to go through the hall which can prove disconcerting for those that may be working there. The limitations of the building mean that the school library is not sited to allow all pupils easy access to its resources. The range of books in the library for the number of pupils on roll is too limited. The continued difficulties of access to the library and limitations in its stock impact on the school's ability to foster pupils' development in terms of library skills and their ability to undertake independent research.

24. The school grounds are all hard surfaced and sloping. The shape and size restricts the range of games that can be played safely and further impacts by limiting the school's ability to offer practice and training facilities thereby allowing pupils greater opportunities to participate in competitive games with other schools. Given the increasing numbers of adults working in the school, the toilet facilities are insufficient.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support for pupils are **good** overall, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with staff, which gives them the confidence to seek support when they have any concerns or wish to share their news. The extent to which the school involves pupils and takes account of their views is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good induction arrangements for children starting school.
- Very good relationships between pupils and staff effectively underpin the support and guidance provided.
- Staff know pupils well and monitor and support their development effectively.
- Pupils' views are valued and pupils appreciate the opportunities offered by the school council to influence decisions about the school.

Commentary

25. Pupils are cared for well. There are appropriate procedures in place for the protection of pupils in line with the locally agreed child protection arrangements. The headteacher is responsible for co-ordinating child protection and is fully trained. In order to ensure that in the event of her absence there is fully trained cover, the deputy headteacher is to be trained in the New Year. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about child protection. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities.
26. The school promotes safe practice on a day-to-day basis in lessons. One full-time and one part-time member of staff are trained in first aid and this provides adequate support for dealing with any minor accidents that are appropriately recorded. There are suitable procedures for dealing with the administration of any medicines. Procedures for making sure that the school provides a safe and healthy environment for pupils are sound overall and generic risk assessments provided by the Local Education Authority are complemented by those completed by the school. Equipment and appliances are checked regularly and emergency evacuation drills check the effectiveness of

procedures in the event of an emergency. Identified concerns are usually addressed promptly.

27. Staff know pupils well and provide good support for their personal development and school work. There are good arrangements for children when they start school, with visits to meet them in playgroups and at home before they start so that they can get to know the staff. Pupils are very happy with the advice that they are given by staff and are confident that they can turn to an adult within the school if they need help.
28. Pupils are proud of their school and have a good sense of ownership of the school. Pupils' views are effectively channelled through the school council that has been successful in putting forward pupils' views and having an influence on decisions. Older pupils, particularly, feel that they are listened to, that their suggestions are taken seriously and that they can play a role in the life of the school by, for example, looking after and recording the issue of playground equipment and games.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents have positive views of the school and the education which it provides and the school has good strategies for promoting the partnership between school and home. The school's links with the community are **satisfactory** and its links with other schools and educational institutions are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children.
- Links with local playgroups and secondary schools are used well to support the induction and transfer of pupils.
- The governors' fund-raising committee is effective in supporting the work of the school and the efforts are appreciated.
- The overall quality of information provided for parents is good.
- The school values parents' views and has good procedures in place to consult with them formally and informally.
- The school's involvement in the 'playing for success' programme has very positive benefits for pupils.
- Community links could be extended to benefit pupils' learning.
- There is no PTA to support the work of the school.
- A small minority of parents do not provide sufficient support for their children's learning and regular attendance at school.

Commentary

29. The significant majority of parents are positive about the school and the education provided for their children. However, a small number of parents expressed some concerns about the information that they receive regarding their children's progress and about the ease with which they can contact the school to discuss a concern. However, inspectors judge that overall, parents are provided with good information throughout the year about their children's progress and targets and that the headteacher and staff are readily accessible to parents. This broadly reflects the position at the time of the last inspection.
30. The information provided for parents, and the willingness of staff to meet them, benefit the school's partnership with home in supporting children's learning. The provision of

information takes various forms which effectively complement each other. Annual reports provide satisfactory information, including an overview of work covered, comments on progress, pupils' own evaluation of their work and an indication of targets to move pupils on to the next stage of their learning. Consultation meetings, at which specific targets are discussed with parents, also offer examples of how they can support their children's learning at home and on family outings. In addition, parents are regularly sent generic targets appropriate to their children's ability. Teachers are readily accessible to parents, to answer questions and discuss any concerns.

31. Parental support for pupils' learning at home is generally satisfactory, although a small minority do not share books readily with their children or support their homework, and a very small minority also fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly. There are good procedures in place to consult with parents both formally and informally.
32. The school has a suitable complaints procedure, although in the last year there have been no formal complaints. Because of the accessibility of staff and the availability of bilingual support, it is usually possible to answer parental concerns informally. There is no parents' association as such but the governors, who include parents, have a fund-raising committee which organises activities such as a 'bonus ball draw' and lets the car park on Saturdays. Through these means a significant subsidy for the residential activity undertaken by all pupils in their last year at the school has been provided, and other aspects of the work of the school supported.
33. Links with secondary schools are good and are being developed within the pyramid of local primary schools, as are links with a local advanced skills teacher who is to support staff with information and communication technology development in the New Year. Pupils use library and mathematics facilities at the local secondary school and have good opportunities to visit prior to transferring at the age of 11. A strength of the transfer process is that every parent is interviewed individually at Ranelagh prior to his or her child transferring.
34. Links with the community are satisfactory overall and the scope is broadly similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. There is scope to extend these links for the benefit of pupils' learning.
35. There are some very positive features in the school's links with the community, such as the link with Ipswich Town Football Club which runs 'playing for success,' a scheme which provides support for information and communication technology and numeracy and involves pupils in curriculum led activities such as measuring the football pitch. This programme has also given pupils opportunities to experience involvement in events such as an 'international football tournament' staged with the benefit of a video link to Ghana and for gifted and talented pupils to participate in summer schools to further support their learning. A local supermarket displays children's work and provides opportunities for pupils to 'go behind the scenes' and local cinemas have invited pupils to special viewings of films which the school has used to form a basis for creative writing.
36. The school has sound links with the local emergency services and medical staff, such as the school nurse and dental hygienist, to support pupils' personal, social and health education. Local residents support history by coming into classes and acting as oral witnesses to talk about their experiences in periods that the children are studying and to answer their questions.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The quality of the headteacher's leadership is **good** and she has a clear understanding of what the school does well and what still needs to be achieved. The leadership and management by other key staff are effective. The governance of the school is much improved since the previous inspection and is now **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides clear and sensitive leadership.
- The day-to-day management of the school is good.
- Able and committed teaching and support staff work hard to ensure that the school's aims are met.
- The school demonstrates clear and effective commitment to inclusion.
- Governors provide sensitive support and are successful in performing their role as the school's 'critical friend'.
- More effective use could be made of the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs in managing arrangements for those with such needs.

Commentary

37. Good leadership and management of the school by the headteacher have brought about considerable innovation and development since the previous inspection. The headteacher provides the school with astute leadership. This has led to considerable improvements in the standards reached by pupils. Of note has been the careful way in which different teaching styles and techniques have been developed. Many lessons now feature, for example, many interesting and valid opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their speaking and listening skills. This has led to pupils now being more confident and assured in articulating their views and ideas to a wider audience. The headteacher has openly encouraged others to innovate. This has led to improvements in the quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils generally across the school in information and communication technology.
38. The role of the co-ordinator is well developed. Key co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have regular non-contact time in order to monitor standards reached by pupils. Together with the headteacher, they have a firm grip on where the pupils achieve well and what areas still need to be developed further. The headteacher and staff understand well the continued need to raise the standards pupils reach in mathematics to a level matching those in similar schools. The work that has already been implemented in order to achieve this is starting to yield results. Performance management arrangements are secure and dovetail in well with both the individual staff's training needs and the longer-term goals of the school. Support staff work well with teachers and across the school. There is a strong commitment from all staff to compensate for some of the challenging circumstances that some pupils experience in their day-to-day lives by providing them with a good quality of education.
39. Governors support the school well and their 'critical friend' role has been developed well since the previous inspection. They are kept regularly informed about school matters by the headteacher. They challenge and question the work of the school in an open and evaluative way. This helps them to develop a clear picture of where pupils are achieving well and what standards still need to be improved. At the time of the last inspection, governors were criticised for not having a clear idea of matters relating to the school budget. Rigorous action since then has led to the governors having a much steadier idea of how best to support the headteacher in managing the budget. This has further contributed to the school having a clear idea of the educational direction it is to take and how funding is to be allocated to support these developments.

40. There are some shortcomings in the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school's special educational needs co-ordinator is part-time and although she does have non-contact time to oversee provision, she has too little direct input into the construction of the pupils' individual education plans. Despite this, the school has a strong policy and ethos of inclusion. Policies promoting racial harmony are known to all and there is a firm commitment to ensuring the aims within these are seen to be evident in the life of the school. As a result, there is a very high level of racial harmony and all pupils are treated with courtesy and respect.
41. A key issue from the last inspection was to reduce and make more manageable the workload of the special educational needs co-ordinator. This has been successfully tackled. Nevertheless, there are still weaknesses in the way in which this aspect of the school is managed. Much of the co-ordinator's time centres on maintaining documentation and undertaking administrative procedures. The more important aspects of her role do not take priority. These are, in particular, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, the quality of individual education plans and their use and having a regular direct teaching remit with pupils who have special educational needs, other than those in her class. As she is not a full-time member of staff it is at times difficult for her to liaise promptly with others involved with this group of pupils.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003			
Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	553 462	Balance from previous year	68 645
Total expenditure	552 193	Balance carried forward to the next year	69 914
Expenditure per pupil	3 001		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Pupils in the combined nursery and reception class receive a good start to their education. The teaching is good in all areas of learning, and good quality planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of these early years of education. Although standards on entry cover a fairly broad spectrum of lower ability, the majority of the children are assessed as being very well below average. Their speaking and listening and social skills, are underdeveloped. During their time in the Early Years class, the children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. By the time they move into Year 1, a significant percentage of children will not have achieved the Early Learning Goals in any of the six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and standards remain well below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development because of their low starting point. The standards in the other four areas of the curriculum are below average.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are learning to work collaboratively.
- Their independence is fostered well.
- Children concentrate for longer periods as they settle and become confident.

Commentary

43. Most children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are becoming more confident and learning to establish good relationships with one another, the class teacher, nursery nurses and the classroom assistant. They generally behave well and are encouraged to be considerate of others. However, their personal, social and emotional development is not as well advanced as that of most children of their age and standards are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers and assistants capture the children's interest and attention by their enthusiasm and by good use of resources. These qualities, together with intelligent and sensitive planning, help to develop the children's ability to concentrate, although many find it hard to do so for a sustained period. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement and teaching is good. This is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence. Personal independence in toileting and changing for physical education is promoted well, and there are good opportunities for the children to gain independence during more formal activities.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's knowledge of letters and their sounds is promoted well.
- Their speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively through many activities.
- Despite good provision and the good progress made during the year, standards in this area of learning are still well below average by the time children start Year 1.

Commentary

44. Good opportunities are provided for all children to develop their speaking skills through all areas of learning. Sensitive input from adults encourages them to talk about what they are doing. When listening to stories, most children join in enthusiastically with repetitive phrases but are unable to read the words in the 'big books' used. Early writing skills are encouraged effectively with the use of sand, trays of glitter and other resources, and some children are beginning to write recognisable individual letters. The classroom has a good range of picture, fiction and non-fiction books, which are accessible to the children, and which all the adults use well to promote good reading habits. Good use is made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills. Many children start school with extremely poor language skills. Good teaching helps them to make significant progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing, but standards are still well below average by the time they enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although children's mathematical skills are well below average for their age, they are beginning to count with confidence and their mathematical vocabulary is developing well.
- Their emerging skills are used across a range of curriculum areas.

Commentary

45. The children make good progress in their very early understanding of number, shape and measure. One or two can handle simple calculations with numbers to 5 and most can count to ten, and backwards. Some children recognise basic shapes and colours. The staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their use of mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more' or 'less', but some children find it hard to understand these concepts. Imaginative play is used well in this respect. By working together in the 'class shop' the children begin to develop an appreciation of how number is represented in the form of money and that this is needed in order to buy goods. Although they make good progress in their emergent mathematical skills, standards are still well below average by the time they move into Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom, outdoors and further afield.
- Good use is made of the classroom based computers to support the children in their learning.

Commentary

46. Children make good progress in this area of learning because they have plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. They show curiosity and interest in all activities presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. They quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. The children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of objects, and displays encourage their interest and curiosity effectively. They have frequent opportunities to work outdoors and their attention is drawn to the natural world through topics such as the weather. Adults use questioning well to develop the children's vocabulary and the way they use language to explain their thoughts and ideas. They encourage the children to appreciate their world.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills in lessons in the school hall.
- Children develop their skill in the use of pencils, scissors and other small tools well.

Commentary

47. The school provides good facilities to develop children's physical skills, for example, through frequent use of the garden area near the classroom, which is used for a broad range of outdoor activities in all weathers. Planned sessions are used well to develop children's physical skills, and good use is made of timetabled sessions in the school hall. The children were observed in a lively session with the parachute in which they also developed their self-confidence by running under the ballooning parachute to retrieve objects. The staff provide a good range of opportunities to help children to develop their co-ordination and dexterity through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.
- They have access to a good range of resources for their creative work.

Commentary

48. Children have a suitable range of opportunities to develop their creativity, for example through the use of a variety of pencils, paints and collage to create pictures and

patterns. Musical skills are developed well as they learn to sing a number of songs and rhymes and are given opportunities to listen to music as well as playing percussion instruments. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play and enjoy using the home corner as well as specific role-play scenarios such as the current 'supermarket'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- From a low point of attainment when they first enter the school, pupils' achievement is good.
- There is good leadership and management of the subject that is proving effective in raising standards.
- There are considerable strengths in the quality of teaching.
- The quality and use made of assessment are both good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Literacy skills are not always promoted sufficiently in other subjects.
- Information and communication technology is not used well enough in day-to-day lessons.
- A range of books is not easily accessible in the library areas.

Commentary

49. The standards pupils in Year 6 achieve vary from year to year but indicate an improving trend. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, Year 6 pupils attained standards below those found nationally but the pupils achieved higher standards when compared with similar schools. Year 2 pupils attained standards in writing which were average when compared nationally and well above average when compared with similar schools. In reading, standards were well below average but average when compared with similar schools. The findings of the inspection indicate a similar picture in terms of the standards that the pupils reach.
50. When pupils enter Year 1 assessment data shows that their attainment is well below average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well and make good progress in the development of their basic skills as they move through each of the classes. The co-ordinator's good leadership and management of the subject have contributed significantly to the raising of standards. For example, teaching is monitored, evaluated and supported effectively. She has a clear knowledge and understanding of where teaching is strongest and can pinpoint aspects of good practice that have a significant impact upon how well pupils learn. A key issue for action from the last inspection was to raise standards in writing throughout the school. This has been tackled successfully. Whilst measures have been implemented to improve the library provision, there is still more which needs to be done in order for it to have a greater impact on pupils' learning. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that space is at a premium and this is the prime reason for the issue not being fully addressed. The pace of improvement since 1999 has been satisfactory.

51. One of the main reasons for pupils' good achievement is that teachers make good use of the information that they gain from the regular checks and reviews that they make of the pupils' progress. This is evident when they give pupils work that is challenging yet well matched to their varying learning needs. For example, teachers quickly identify the needs of pupils who may have difficulties with learning so that support staff and adult helpers can give them the required help. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils whose first language is not English are supported well by teachers who do their best to provide extra resources, such as specialist books and support from outside agencies. Consequently, these pupils also achieve well. The majority of teachers make good use of homework to support pupils' learning and many pupils receive regular help at home with their work.
52. Staff teach basic skills well, such as initial letter sounds in reading and punctuation in writing. As they move through the school, the pupils become more confident in applying these skills in their day-to-day work. By the end of Year 2, higher-attaining pupils read with confidence and clarity and can give reasons why they choose and like the books that they read. However, the majority of pupils need some support to help them make sense of what they read and pupils are hesitant in reading and understanding words and text with which they are unfamiliar. By the end of Year 6, higher-attaining pupils are able to discuss and explain their reading preferences and they have a satisfactory understanding of the types of texts produced by modern-day authors and earlier writers such as J M Barrie. As the pupils move through Key Stage 2, they develop skills such as skimming and scanning when using information books, but their general attainment is below that expected for 11-year-olds.
53. In writing at Key Stage 1, teachers' expectations of handwriting and how pupils set out their work are not high enough. Therefore pupils' work is not as neat as it could be and the standard of handwriting is inconsistent. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in their understanding of the need to vary writing according to its purpose, but their generally low skills mean that few of them produce detailed work that demonstrates effective use of varied vocabulary in order to make their writing lively and interesting.
54. Although most children enter school with underdeveloped language skills, they achieve well in developing their confidence in speaking and listening. In lessons other than English, the pupils are provided with regular opportunities to discuss and think through their ideas. This enables them to make good progress in speaking in front of others, and as they move through the school they become more willing and responsive when asked to do so. Pupils make good progress in developing their listening skills as teachers are effective in promoting this area of learning. As a result, the pupils learn to appreciate the need to listen carefully to others. Teachers provide good role models by using a varied range of vocabulary. However, despite this the pupils themselves have a narrow repertoire of words and they find it difficult to express clearly their ideas and experiences.
55. Teaching and learning are good. There are considerable strengths in the quality of teaching in some of the junior classes. While no unsatisfactory teaching was evident during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning in classes that are taught by more than one teacher lacks consistency, and expectations of what pupils are able to achieve can vary as a result. Strengths of teaching centre round the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the effectiveness of guided reading sessions and the very good use and deployment of learning support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs and those whose main language is not English. There are some excellent examples of how thoroughly teachers mark pupils' work where they ensure that the points they identify for pupils to improve are carried out meticulously. This is

not, however, consistent and in some classes, pupils' work is not marked well enough, so they continue to make the same errors. There are good systems in place to set and review targets for pupils to reach in lessons and over a period of time. However, the targets need to be tracked more rigorously and frequently so that the pace at which each pupil and groups of pupils learn can be monitored more closely. The co-ordinator has plans to address this in the near future as part of the measures to track any differences in the achievement of boys and girls.

56. Good quality teaching underpins the improving trend in standards. The upward trend has also been accelerated by the impact of good provision in the nursery and reception, as well as the good use made of learning intervention strategies, such as additional literacy support. However, effective use is not always made of information and communication technology to support pupils' literacy development. In science, pupils use a word-processing package to draft the results of their investigation work, but in the main, greater use could be made of computers in day-to-day lessons. The location of the library also limits pupils' independence when using reference and research materials. Restricted access further curtails opportunities for pupils to develop their love of books and literature.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Pupils have satisfactory literacy skills that they apply in other subjects. However, teachers do not provide enough work in subjects such as history and religious education for pupils to practise and develop these skills. For example, opportunities are missed for pupils to produce pieces of extended or imaginative writing based on what they are learning in these subjects. In a Year 5/6 geography lesson, good use was made of a debate about environmental issues in St. Lucia, and in a Year 1 religious education lesson pupils enacted the first Christmas. Such opportunities are good for developing pupils' weaker speaking and listening skills and confidence; however, this work is not always followed up by giving the pupils further scope to write and explain their views about what has been discussed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- Pupils achieve well from a low starting point.
- The subject is well led and managed and both the headteacher and the co-ordinator have a clear idea of what still needs to be achieved.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in mathematics on a daily basis.

Commentary

58. The end of Key Stage 1 2003 National Curriculum test results indicated that pupils reached standards that were well below average, against both the national average and when compared with similar schools. The same picture of attainment was evident in the 2003 end of key stage National Curriculum test results for Key Stage 2 pupils. While steadily improving, the picture of standards reached by pupils in both key stages

in mathematics is not as positive as that in English and science. In addition, over time, at Key Stage 2 girls perform less well in the tests than the boys. The management of the school has been, however, proactive in putting into place measures to boost the profile of mathematics in the school and to raise the standards that pupils reach. Inspection evidence points to rising attainment by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates no difference in attainment between boys and girls. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards that are below average. This is primarily due to a smaller than average number of pupils reaching the higher levels. Given their very low attainment when pupils first enter the school, achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This reflects the range of teaching seen which is often very good in the upper part of the school.

59. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' ability to remember and recall their previous learning limits the standards that they reach. They need constant reinforcement of basic skills in number, measure and shape and how to collect and present simple mathematical data in simple charts and tables. At Key Stage 2, pupils make more rapid progress in their understanding of different mathematical ideas. They understand how different strategies such as 'partitioning' can help them solve problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils need some support to help them work through and determine the most effective way to solve everyday problems, and evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils are given sufficient scope and opportunities to develop these skills. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of how to display mathematical information in the form of tables, charts and diagrams. Information and communication technology is increasingly used well in this respect, although it tends to occur more when pupils are taught in the computer suite rather than in everyday lessons.
60. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory; in Key Stage 2 it is good and sometimes very good. Many lessons in both key stages give the pupils good scope to work in pairs to think through ideas and then share their thinking with the rest of the class. This proves useful for all pupils but in particular those with English as an additional language, as they develop the confidence to explain their thinking to the rest of the class. At Key Stage 1, pupils whose general capacity to retain what they learn is weak, are given good opportunities to use practical equipment to reinforce their understanding of the mathematical concepts they are learning. However, in the main what teachers expect of the pupils in terms of what they formally record is too low. This makes it difficult for pupils to use their exercise books to refer back to what they have covered previously in order to recap on their learning. At Key Stage 2, teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding and provide pupils with interesting work. Opening sessions are crisp and effective and involve the use of strategies such as pupils using a range of numbers to try and reach a specific target set by the teacher. Pupils respond well, trying very hard to get the right answer and as a result they learn that there are different ways and solutions to problems. At Key Stage 2 the marking of pupils' work is particularly effective, directing them to explore and learn from the mistakes they have made.
61. There is effective leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator, who is a leading teacher for mathematics in the local education authority, has a clear idea of provision and what still needs to be achieved in order to raise pupils' achievements further. She herself takes small groups of higher-attaining Year 2 pupils for extra sessions during the week in order to raise standards. Monitoring of teaching is regular with the information being used well to guide further developments. This work has

resulted in improving the opportunities for oral work in lessons to develop pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to further strengthen the use that teachers make of computers and supporting software to enhance learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Greater use is now made of the potential in other subjects to extend and reinforce pupils' learning of mathematics. The computer suite is increasingly used to support pupils' learning of mathematics in other subjects. In addition, subjects such as design and technology are used well by teachers to develop, for example, pupils' understanding and skills in measurement. This successfully expands the pupils' understanding of how mathematics is to be seen and used in their everyday lives.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well below average.
- Achievement at Key Stage 2 is good.
- The quality of teachers' planning is good, ensuring good coverage of the National Curriculum.
- The school has an improving range of resources.
- Pupils' poor literacy skills mean that written work does not always reflect their scientific knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

63. Results in the most recent national tests showed that standards in Year 6 were below the national average, but when compared with similar schools, they were above average. Assessments made by teachers at the end of Year 2 in 2003 indicated that pupils reached standards that were well below the national average but average when compared with similar schools. The findings of the inspection very much reflect the results of the 2003 National Curriculum tests at both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, and in Key Stage 2 progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good and this is the main reason why pupils make more rapid progress in the development of their scientific understanding than in Key Stage 1. Given that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is very low, their overall progress is good. However, progress in some aspects of science is adversely affected by the pupils' poor literacy skills. Pupils do not always find it easy to record in depth what they are learning.
64. At Key Stage 2, pupils make more marked progress in their understanding of different scientific ideas and concepts than they do at Key Stage 1. Here, the pupils' generally weaker general knowledge and understanding and their ability to retain and then recall what they have learned limit the overall pace of their progress. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but more could be expected of the pupils in terms of what they formally record during their science lessons.
65. Although some unsatisfactory teaching was seen at Key Stage 2 during the inspection, the overall quality is good and sometimes very good. Where teaching is of a higher quality, pupils make good progress in their understanding of scientific concepts that include forces, living processes and materials. Good emphasis is placed on the pupils learning and consolidating their understanding through practical work and by discussing what they are exploring. This proves particularly beneficial for those pupils with special educational needs and those whose main spoken or written language is not English. Teaching duly emphasises the need for pupils to think carefully about what variables might affect the outcomes of their investigations. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their understanding of what is meant by a 'fair test'. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is due to a lack of secure subject knowledge that adversely affects the rate of pupils' progress. In Key Stage 2, the overall pace of pupils' learning is affected by their generally weak reporting skills which do not always reflect their knowledge of the scientific ideas they are learning. When pupils are taught in the computer suite, they use information and communication technology well to support their learning. However, greater use could be made of information and communication technology in daily lessons to extend what pupils know and to reinforce how computers and other information and communication technology equipment can be used to research and present the findings of their work.
66. Pupils generally present their work well, and careful, developmental marking shows how they can improve their knowledge, understanding and presentation. They receive good guidance on how to report experiments sequentially, and how to draw conclusions. Assessment is carried out regularly and careful records of achievement kept, together with examples of work. Teachers when planning pupils' future work take sufficient account of the results. The joint co-ordinators have a good grasp and knowledge of the subject and how standards can be improved. The subject is being monitored effectively. The planning has recently been adapted to ensure good coverage of the subject and a logical sequence of learning. Resources have been reviewed and replenished to link closely with units of study.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made good progress since the previous inspection.
- Given pupils' low attainment on entry to the school, they achieve well.
- The computer suite is used well to support teaching.
- Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology in daily lessons.
- Both the previous and current co-ordinators have worked hard to boost teachers' confidence in using computers more regularly.

Commentary

67. At the time of the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology were below expectations. The school has worked hard since then to improve the opportunities pupils are provided with to develop their understanding of how information and communication technology can support them in daily learning. As a result of this good work, pupils reach standards that are in line with expectations by the end of both key stages. Achievement by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good overall. However, pupils' overall progress is restricted by teachers not always making full and effective use of information and communication technology in daily lessons.
68. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are provided with regular opportunities to use the computer suite and by doing so they quickly learn what is meant by 'logging on' and how to use a password. They save and retrieve information and understand that a word-processor can help them to produce well-presented work. However, their weak and generally slow keyboard skills limit what they are able to produce. As they move through Key Stage 2, increasing use is made of word-processing packages and pupils make steady progress in their understanding of how to use the finer features to make their work more pleasing to read. Good scope is given for the pupils to use the computer suite to access the Internet and explore different web pages in support of the topics they are studying. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of how programmes such as spreadsheets can be used to solve numerical problems involving large amounts of data. Teaching is effective in encouraging the pupils to then use the charting facilities usually found within a spreadsheet to present their information in the form of tables or charts.
69. While the teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory overall, that seen when pupils are taught in the school's computer suite is often good. Since the last inspection, teachers' confidence in using the computers in the suite has grown and their ability to lead pupils sensitively through the various features of the software they use is often good. Pupils respond well to the challenge and high expectations that the teachers have of them. As a result, they produce work that reflects their age and ability. Learning support assistants also effectively guide the pupils in their efforts, particularly those with a higher level of need or who are still gaining confidence in using English. Despite this good teaching, the overall impact is lessened because insufficient use is made of computers in daily lessons. Few of the teachers' day-to-day lesson plans highlight sufficiently how information and communication technology could be used to support the pupils in their learning. As a result, the pupils get insufficient opportunities to practise further their skills or extend the knowledge and understanding that they have accrued while being taught in the computer suite.

70. There is effective leadership and management of the subject. Of note has been the determined action by the management of the school to improve provision in the subject and to raise the status that it has in the minds of the pupils. Resources are good and there is a clear plan in place to replace older equipment in light of developments in information and communication technology generally.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. While the school is making increasing use of new technologies to support pupils' learning in other subjects, there are missed opportunities to make this more effective. Teachers do identify links in their medium-term planning where information and communication technology can be usefully incorporated to support pupils' learning. In Key Stage 2, for example, science and art and design are well served in this respect. Teachers use art software packages creatively to extend pupils' learning of how new technology can be used to create artwork . However, in the main, insufficient regular use of the classroom-based equipment limits the scope for the pupils to use information and communication technology to support and extend their daily learning.

HUMANITIES

72. There was insufficient work seen in **history** to make a definite judgement on standards and provision. However, pupils' work displayed around the school was of an average standard. This indicates that standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The work in pupils' exercise books shows that teachers could plan better opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, recording and research skills. In some classes, pupils' work is not marked well enough. Throughout the school too little use is made of information and communication technology to promote learning in daily lessons.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and learning and overall achievement by pupils in both key stages is good.
- Pupils enjoy learning about different world faiths.
- Weekly lessons are too short.
- Literacy skills and the use of information and communication technology are not promoted sufficiently.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary.

73. By the end of Year 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' achievement is good and they make significant progress as they move through the school. Pupils enter the school with very limited knowledge and understanding of the subject. By the end of Year 2, the standard of their work is lower than expected but they make good progress in relation to their level of attainment when they first entered the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and standards have been maintained.
74. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity. They know the importance of the Bible, and why people go to church and recall important events which can take place within it. They listen to stories and enact scenes that depict well-known events from the Bible, including the Christmas story. By the end of Year 6, pupils have gained knowledge and understanding of other world faiths, including Judaism and Islam. They have some understanding of the similarities and differences between Christianity and other faiths, and they know the importance and relevance of worship within these different communities. Pupils show good levels of respect for the beliefs of others and a real interest in the different traditions and customs of faiths other than their own.
75. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. More confident teachers whose own knowledge and understanding of the subject is secure provide effective opportunities for discussion which enable pupils to clarify their thinking and express their own opinions. All teachers expect pupils to behave well and work hard, and pupils respond well to these high expectations. There are occasions when lessons are not as imaginative as they might be because teachers lack confidence and direct pupils too rigidly in what they are to learn. As a result, pupils are not given enough opportunities to find out

information for themselves. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and demonstrate a sensible approach when engaging in sensitive discussions with their classmates who are of differing faiths.

76. The dedicated co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She is aware of the need to enrich pupils' learning experiences by providing them with first-hand opportunities to visit different places of worship and talk with people with different faiths. Monitoring has revealed the need for pupils to have more opportunities to write their own accounts of what they have learned and to be more actively engaged in research by using interactive resources such as CD-Roms and Internet search engines. It is acknowledged that this, to some extent, is curtailed by the length of weekly lessons, and more thought is being given to the overall use of curriculum time.

Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards achieved by pupils are average; they achieve well from a very low starting point.
- The quality of some teaching is good.
- Visits, field trips and learning opportunities offered beyond the classroom are insufficient.

Commentary.

77. No teaching or learning in geography was observed during the last inspection, but indications were that progress was satisfactory. Pupils now make good progress by the time they leave Year 6, so this represents an improvement since 1999. While standards are average by the end of Year 6 pupils achieve well throughout the school. This is because the quality of teaching they receive is at least satisfactory and ensures progress is maintained from a very low level of attainment when they begin school.
78. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' work displayed in classrooms and throughout the school indicates progress is satisfactory. The pupils learn simple map reading skills when visiting a local supermarket and describing their route to school. In Years 3 and 4 teaching continues to be satisfactory. Pupils learn about other places and how they differ from their own locality. When studying an Indian village they use photographs and reference books to find out about daily life. The rate of pupil progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching in one lesson observed in this age group was good and indicative of the generally better standard of teaching and learning in the subject. The lesson provided good opportunities to debate how changes in lifestyle affect the environment. Pupils presented convincing arguments for and against hotel development or maintaining banana plantations on the island of St. Lucia.
79. Whilst some provision is made for pupils to learn beyond the classroom, it is inadequate. Because pupils' prior experiences are limited, they have little in the way of first-hand knowledge or understanding on which to base new learning. Other resources for teaching geography are satisfactory, but some are not used imaginatively and opportunities are missed to bring learning to life through more use of videos, teachers and other adults sharing their travel exploits or use of interactive information and communication technology.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. The inspection focused on the teaching of **art and design** and **music** as the school and parents are proud of the work that the pupils produce in these subjects. No lessons were seen in **physical education** or **design and technology**, and therefore no judgements can be made about pupils' attainment or achievement, or the quality of teaching and learning. However, work seen in design and technology indicated that pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the designing and making process and of the need to evaluate products once they have been completed.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach higher than expected standards at the end of both key stages and their overall achievement is very good.
- Teaching is very good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the works and styles of less commonly known artists.
- Good use is made of sketchbooks to support pupils' learning.
- The school's developing folio of pupils' artwork is excellent.

Commentary

81. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in their understanding of art and design as they move through the school. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards that are above expectations. This indicates good progress since the last inspection. Improvements in teaching and the careful adoption of the local education authority's scheme of work have led to notable improvements. Pupils achieve very well and many talk positively about their art and design work and the enjoyment they draw from the activities they are given to do.
82. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding for their age of the techniques and skills used in drawing, and teaching is highly effective in allowing pupils good opportunities to explore mark-making using a range of different materials. Pupils make equally good progress in their understanding of different printing techniques. They are given every opportunity to explore how different media can be used creatively when printing. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils successfully consolidate and build on their previous learning. They understand what is meant by and how to use techniques such as 'impasto', 'tonking' and 'sgraffito'. Of particular note is the good progress that is made by the pupils in their understanding of the works, styles and techniques of artists that are not particularly well-known. Teachers successfully introduce them to artists such as Patrick Heron, Christopher Ofili, Juan Gvis and Frank Auerbach. Exploring the work of the latter by using information and communication technology, pupils developed a good understanding of how Auerbach often created simple but highly effective portraits by interposing white on black. As pupils move through the school, teaching is effective in developing their understanding of how art can be generated through a wide and varied range of media. In addition, pupils develop a strong appreciation of art and design. Discussions with them indicate that it features prominently among their favourite subjects.

83. Teaching is very good which leads to very good gains in learning by many pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and use the local education authority's detailed scheme of work well to plan pupils' learning. Teachers explain tasks clearly, often in small, step-by-step fashion. Pupils' interest is captured well as a result of the teachers' demonstrations and this motivates them to produce a high standard of work. Teachers effectively and enthusiastically demonstrate to pupils the effects that can be created when using the same techniques and styles as the artists they are exploring. This leads to pupils making good progress in understanding that works can be created using a range of different techniques and materials. Good scope is given for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning. In addition, effective use is made of sketchbooks in many classes. This successfully reinforces the pupils' understanding of the need for preparatory work and of how sketchbooks are useful to allow ideas to be thought through and further refined.
84. Effective leadership and management of the subject help to maintain the high status that it has. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the work that pupils in other year groups produce. This is done in part by collecting examples of outstanding work in a school folio to demonstrate the progress that pupils make. This is of a very high quality and demonstrates clearly the skills, progress and high standards that the pupils reach.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and achievement is good.
- The quality of the teaching is good.
- Older pupils benefit from the teaching of a music specialist.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and they achieve well.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

85. By the end of both key stages, pupils reach standards in line with expectations. Pupils of all abilities achieve well as they move through the school. Much development in the subject has taken place since the previous inspection. By Year 6, most pupils are aware of how rhythm can support their own melodies and how their own compositions could be improved by practice. More able pupils evaluate their work and suggest how it can be improved. They are developing a satisfactory musical vocabulary and have good opportunities to listen to music of different eras and cultures, which supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
86. In the infant assemblies observed, pupils enjoyed their singing which was of a good standard. They sing with enthusiasm and joyfulness and are generally tuneful. Older pupils were not observed singing other than in incidental moments in classes. Pupils' self-confidence is further enhanced through public performance. They take part in an annual show for relatives and visitors, such as last term's 'Joseph and the Amazing

Technicolour Dreamcoat'. The school's extra-curricular provision of musical tuition is suitable and pupils can learn to play the recorder or violin with visiting teachers.

87. In the music lessons observed in the junior classes, the teaching was at least good. In one lesson the Year 3 pupils successfully developed their ability to play a rhythmic accompaniment to a rhyming couplet about cats. In Year 6 good visual and aural examples helped pupils to start planning their own compositions on the theme of 'Outer Space'. The oldest pupils benefit from the teaching of the school's music specialist. Lessons are well planned and combine elements of composing, performing and appraising. Pupils have opportunities to use their own ideas, and the recording of group work enables them to evaluate their compositions. They also have opportunities to play their compositions in class. Little use is made of computers, as yet, for composition or to support pupils' learning.
88. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic and proficient co-ordinator. The school uses his expertise well. The co-ordinator teaches the older pupils in Key Stage 2, but his influence pervades the whole school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

89. One lesson devoted to personal, social and health education was visited, and the school's scheme of work studied. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education appears to be good. All classes have regular lessons devoted to this aspect of the pupils' education, and teachers deal with matters which are relevant to pupils' personal development with sensitivity. Major themes are reinforced through school assemblies, and notices and displays in classrooms indicate a consistent and caring approach.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3

The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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