

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FRESSINGFIELD VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Eye

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124731

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Rutter

Reporting inspector: Mr J Earish  
23216

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> June – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2003

Inspection number: 259435  
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stradbroke Road  
Fressingfield  
Eye  
Suffolk

Postcode: IP21 5PR

Telephone number: 01379 586393

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Paul Varney

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23216	John Earish	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils achievements; How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19374	Wendy Sheehan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21420	Paula Allison	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
10214	Brian Milton	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How well are pupils taught?
8839	Mike Egerton	Team inspector	Foundation stage Design and technology Science Religious education	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Fressingfield VC Primary School is situated in a predominately agricultural area close to the Norfolk border. It serves the villages of Fressingfield, Metfield and Weybread. The school is smaller than most, and moved to its present site in 1996. There are 143 pupils taught in five classes, including 24 children attending part-time in the nursery. There is wide variation in the size of cohorts, and in the balance between boys and girls in some classes. Many pupils live in owner-occupied housing, but there has been a significant increase in social housing within the last five years. The roll reflects a wide variety of income groups and home backgrounds. Twelve pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This proportion is below the national average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs, and this too is below the national average. Almost all pupils are of white, UK heritage, and there are no pupils speaking English as an additional language. This is very low when compared with national figures. There are currently nine pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. This too is well below average in national terms. Attainment on entry to the school varies widely from year to year. Overall, it is average.

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

This is a good school. It successfully develops the potential of its pupils so that by the age of 11 they are confident, learn independently and make good progress. Pupils are very eager to learn, are very interested in their work and behave very well. The quality of teaching is good. The headteacher, staff, governors and parents all work closely together in partnership. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards achieved in reading, speaking and listening are above average across the school.
- Standards in science are above average by the age of 11 years.
- Pupils achieve high standards in the creative and expressive arts.
- The school monitors pupils' personal development very well, and they are very well supported.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour contribute to the excellent relationships within the school.
- Teaching is good, with nearly half of the lessons observed during the inspection being very good or excellent.
- The partnership between home and school is very good, and provides pupils with a very positive environment for learning.

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

- Opportunities for writing across the curriculum.
- Targeting and supporting of pupils to develop their mathematical skills in problem solving.
- Opportunities for children in reception and the nursery to work together.

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

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

Overall, the school has made good progress since its last inspection in March 1998. The curriculum, previously satisfactory, is now very good. All of the issues from the previous report have been successfully addressed. Schemes of work have been successfully developed, and multicultural education has been successfully integrated across the curriculum. Teachers now regularly plan together, and medium and long-term plans are frequently reviewed. The procedures for assessing pupils' work are also better and the information gained is being used well to match work to pupils' differing needs. Resources have been enhanced including the provision of laptop computers so that pupils can

use ICT to support their work across the curriculum. Teaching has also improved, with much more very good or better teaching. An analysis of trends in results since the last inspection shows considerable variations, which reflects the considerable differences in the size of cohorts within this small school, and the large differences between the proportions of boys and girls in some classes. However, inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve well overall.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The information shows that standards achieved in English in the national tests in the year 2002 were average. They were below average when compared with standards achieved by similar schools. In mathematics, standards were below the national average, and below average when compared with those of similar schools. Below average standards were achieved in science nationally, and these were below the average of similar schools. However, when judged against their prior attainment at seven years, pupils achieved very well in English, well in mathematics and satisfactorily in science. Over the previous two years, results have been above average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. However, the trend in the school's average points score for all three subjects was below the national trend.

Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, speaking and listening are now above average across the school, and in writing and mathematics they are average. In science, standards are average for pupils aged seven years, and above average by the age of eleven years. Standards in art and design are very good across the school. In all other subjects standards are at least satisfactory. They are good in history and geography, and very good in dance by the age of seven. At eleven, pupils achieve good standards in design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and games. Standards in swimming are very good. Pupils achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education by the age of seven, and exceed them by eleven years. Pupils achieve well, and the school has set realistic targets for pupils' performance in 2003.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils work very hard and concentrate very well, and show very good attitudes in all they do. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and work and play together happily.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school in lessons, and at all other times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils greatly benefit from the well-integrated, family atmosphere in the school. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Very good.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. In all but two lessons, the quality of teaching was good or better. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. For the Foundation Stage, teaching was good overall, but very good in the nursery. For pupils aged five to seven years, all of the lessons were at least good, and one in three lessons were very good or better. For the older pupils aged seven to eleven years, all of the lessons were at least good, and two out of five were very good or better. Teachers are enthusiastic and are very clear about what they expect pupils to learn. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. A particularly good feature of teaching is the quality of planning which ensures that lessons are interesting, varied and challenging to pupils of all abilities. Literacy and numeracy are well taught, and the quality of learning is good across the school. No significant weaknesses were observed in the quality of teaching during the period of the inspection. Basic skills in numeracy and literacy are well taught. Teachers are providing pupils with opportunities to practise these skills, but there could be more opportunities for writing across the curriculum. Information and communication technology is being used very well to support learning in many subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum has been very well adapted to the very special circumstances of a small school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision results in good progress for pupils with special needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development make a very positive contribution to the overall personal development of pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well within a safe environment.

There are some particularly strong elements to the curriculum, for example information and communication technology is used very well to support learning across the curriculum. Literacy skills are well taught and there is a good emphasis on investigation skills in science. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on the creative and expressive arts, which results in high standards in this area and has a positive effect on pupils' motivation and personal development. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal and social development. The school has a very good partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The personal leadership of the headteacher is very good, and provides clear educational direction. The very good teamwork between all staff is a significant strength of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are knowledgeable and are very active in supporting the school. Their role in shaping the school's direction is very good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at analysing overall strengths and weaknesses, and using this information to set priorities.

The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of time, people, accommodation and resources for the benefit of all pupils.
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The headteacher and governors share a clear view of the future development of the school and work in close partnership. The commitment of the Chair of Governors is considerable. Governors are particularly good at providing practical help for the school. Staffing ratios are good. Learning resources are adequate and are well stored, although storage space is at a premium within the school's accommodation. Good improvements have recently been made in the quality of information technology equipment. Good use is made of all sources of funding, and the effects of spending decisions are carefully monitored and evaluated.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school</li> <li>• The behaviour of pupils.</li> <li>• The way that the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Children become mature and responsible, and make good progress.</li> <li>• The range of interesting activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about how children are getting on at school.</li> <li>• The school working closely with parents.</li> <li>• The amount of work some children do at home.</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Pupils enjoy school, and form excellent relationships with their teachers and with each other. The school has worked very hard to involve parents in the life of the school, and they find it very easy to approach the headteacher and staff with suggestions and problems. A minority of parents felt they are not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on and that the school does not work sufficiently closely with parents. Additionally, some parents had concerns about the amount of homework. This is not supported by inspection evidence. The range and variety of information provided for parents, and the opportunities for meeting teachers and coming into school are very good. The use of homework was judged to be satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

- 1 Conclusions drawn from national tests must be treated with caution, since the groups of pupils assessed at the end of both key stages are often small. This means that a considerable percentage change can occur through a movement of one level by a single pupil. Similarly, an analysis of trends in results over the past four years shows considerable variations, since the year-on-year differences in the attainment of a very small number of pupils are magnified when each individual pupil represents a large proportion of the overall total. In addition, there are considerable differences in the size of cohorts within the school, which ranges from eleven to twenty two pupils. There are also significant differences between the proportions of boys and girls in each class. In one cohort, there is one boy and thirteen girls, and in another there are five girls and seventeen boys.
- 2 The school's results in the 2002 national tests show that standards in English were average. They were below average when compared with standards achieved by similar schools. In mathematics, standards were below average nationally, and below average when compared with those of similar schools. Below average standards were achieved in science nationally, and these were below the average of similar schools. However, when judged against their prior attainment at seven years, pupils achieved very well in English, well in mathematics and satisfactorily in science. Over the previous two years, results have been above average in English and science, but below average in mathematics.
- 3 Inspection evidence indicates that standards in speaking and listening, reading, and science are above average. Standards in writing and mathematics are average. This is an unusual cohort, with 25 per cent of pupils on the special needs register, and nearly half of the pupils having joined the school since Year 2. They are achieving well, and there appears to be no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. These results represent an improvement on those for 2002, particularly in mathematics, which has been below or well below average for the last four years. Standards in English are usually good but are currently lower than they have been. The number of pupils who have difficulties with writing is having a significant impact on the overall results.
- 4 Standards in art and design and swimming are very good. In all other subjects standards are at least satisfactory, and by the age of 11, pupils achieve good standards in design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and games. Pupils exceed the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.
- 5 An analysis of the 2002 test results for pupils aged seven years show that the school achieved good standards in reading and writing, but well below average standards in mathematics. Again, results for a single year must be treated with caution, but inspection evidence shows that standards in reading remain good, though in writing they are satisfactory. Standards in mathematics have improved considerably and are now satisfactory. Standards in art and design and dance are very good. In all other subject standards are at least satisfactory, except in geography, music and history where they are good.

- 6 Data supplied by the school show that pupils in Year 4 have also achieved well when compared to their low Year 2 results in 2001. This was a small cohort of pupils who had significant individual learning needs. The school has worked very hard to improve standards, and pupils have achieved the school target of 70 per cent at Level 2b by the end of Year 3. This is confirmed by inspection evidence.
- 7 The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Children enter the nursery with average levels of attainment, and by the time they are ready to transfer into the reception class the majority of them will have achieved practically all the Early Learning Goals in the different areas of learning. This is largely due to the quality of teaching and the support of classroom assistants and the nursery nurse, who are well briefed in their roles. Planning is very good, expectations are high, the management of children is very good, and the interaction between children and adults is very effective.
- 8 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and have full access to the curriculum. They benefit from support in the classroom with the classroom assistants, and during separate withdrawal lessons to improve their basic skills. Teachers clearly identify appropriate tasks and opportunities for them within their planning, and they are making good progress. There are good examples of this in mathematics, science and English, where work is well designed for the needs of these particular pupils. Careful monitoring of pupils' achievement leads to regular adjustment of the targets, so that good quality learning is sustained. Teachers are also planning well for those pupils who are more able and work at a faster pace.
- 9 Standards in the creative arts are very good across the school. There are very good opportunities for pupils to explore materials and techniques and to develop their ideas using music and dance. This enables pupils to take the skills and knowledge learned in one subject and apply them in other disciplines. Thus, pupils do not study one subject in isolation, and this helps them make sense of their learning, with consequent good achievement.
- 10 Standards in information and communication technology are currently above average by the age of 11 years. The provision for information and communication technology has improved considerably since the last inspection, and teachers are now using software very well to support learning across the curriculum. Basic skills in numeracy and literacy are well taught. Teachers are providing pupils with good opportunities to practise these skills, but there could be more opportunities for writing across the curriculum.
- 11 The governors and the headteacher have recently monitored the progress of boys and girls and different groups in the mixed age classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Results showed the best progress for the majority was when they were in single age classes. As a result, English and mathematics are taught in single aged groups from age seven to eleven years. A similar analysis is being carried out with the younger pupils. This is an example of how the school is constantly trying to improve standards within a small school by identifying variations through a systematic analysis of results and trends over time.
- 12 The school sets suitably challenging targets and strives to exceed them. It exceeded its targets in English in 2002 and just missed them in mathematics. It works hard to raise standards in all subjects. The well-balanced and very relevant curriculum throughout the school ensures that pupils achieve well overall. This, together with the clear learning objectives set by teachers in lessons, has a positive effect on raising standards.

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

- 13 Pupils have very good attitudes to school and learning, as reported at the time of the last inspection. Behaviour in lessons and around the school has continued to be very good, and there is no evidence of bullying or harassment. The positive, friendly and supportive ethos has a significant impact on the quality of the pupils' learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, display a very good approach to lessons and all aspects of school. This has a positive effect on the rate at which they learn.
- 14 All parents feel that behaviour in the school is very good. They also believe that pupils are helped to work hard and achieve their best. Parents are pleased that their children enjoy coming to school. Inspection findings confirm the parents' views.
- 15 Children in the Foundation Stage display very good attitudes to their work. They are enthusiastic learners and listen very attentively. In lessons they are all fully involved in activities and show good confidence when talking to others. They are developing well their skills in sharing and working together. This contributes to the good learning in the Foundation Stage.
- 16 All groups of pupils have very good attitudes to their learning. Pupils work very hard in lessons, are always interested in what they are doing and are very well motivated to learn. In discussion, pupils say that teachers make learning fun and interesting, for example, by using puzzles in mathematics lessons. Pupils concentrate very well, listen very carefully, and enjoy all challenges set. For example, in a Year 3/4 art lesson pupils were designing and making aboriginal bowls. All pupils remained focussed, were well motivated and talked animatedly about their work. In a Year 2 dance lesson linked to a seaside topic, pupils felt tremendously proud of their learning and concentrated very well when performing and watching others perform. These high levels of interest and enthusiasm for all aspects of school life contribute to the good learning of all pupils.
- 17 Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good. In all lessons observed, pupils were calm, orderly and attentive. No child had to be reprimanded in the majority of lessons observed, and this ensured that they could be delivered at a good pace. At lunchtimes, the majority of pupils are well mannered and sociable. A particularly good feature of playtimes is the way older pupils involve younger pupils in their games. On trips out of school, for example to the swimming pool, Year 5 pupils displayed exemplary behaviour on the bus and at the poolside. In discussions, pupils feel there is very little bullying and teachers readily help sort out any problems. There have been no exclusions during the current year.
- 18 The pupils have excellent relationships with each other and all adults. There is a great deal of mutual respect within a calm, purposeful learning atmosphere. This is effective in developing pupils' maturity, and gives them considerable confidence to contribute to discussions in lessons and talk politely and confidently to visitors. For example, pupils waiting at the swimming pool chatted happily with adults and their friends, valuing and listening carefully to the contributions of each person. In lessons, pupils always work very well in pairs and small groups, and this helps to promote a positive learning atmosphere.
- 19 Pupils' personal development is very good. Those pupils elected to the school council take their roles seriously, and this provides opportunities for a good number of pupils to be involved in developing their citizenship skills. Many pupils are given responsible roles to help with the running of the school or supporting younger pupils, and this supports their personal development very well. Projects such as the 'India and Hindu Days', and joint community activities such as maypole dancing and drama productions, broaden pupils' view of the world around them, and help develop inquisitive minds.

- 20 Attendance is very good and well above the national average, which ensures that pupils have full learning opportunities. The majority of pupils arrive at school punctually and registration takes up the minimum of time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

- 21 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in over nine out of ten of the lessons observed. Good and very good teaching was observed in all parts of the school. Four excellent lessons were observed. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen.
- 22 Strengths of teaching and learning are:
- the effective way in which lessons are planned,
  - the high expectations teachers' have of pupils' learning,
  - the way teachers manage pupils within lessons, providing a firm base for learning,
  - the excellent relationships between pupils and with teachers,
  - the good knowledge and understanding of subjects by the teachers.
- 23 Area for improvement is:
- increasing opportunities for reception children in class 1 to work alongside those in the nursery.
- 24 The quality of teaching is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection in 1998. This is a good reflection on the staff new to the school, as well as on the improved good practice of those who were in the school at the time of the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the current inspection, and the amount of teaching observed which was very good or better had increased from 27 percent in 1998 to 47 percent.
- 25 Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. It is never less than satisfactory and often very good, with observations of excellent teaching being made in the nursery. It is the high quality of teaching in the nursery that enables all the children to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Throughout the Foundation Stage, planning is good, and the support staff and nursery nurse are involved in all stages of planning and have very clear roles and responsibilities during activities. They make a significant contribution to the children's learning.
- 26 Teachers work hard to manage pupils in the mixed aged classes in Class 1 and 2. This grouping is entirely dependent on age and does not relate to ability. Class 1 consists of the reception children<sup>1</sup> and pupils in Year 1. These pupils are often divided into groups, with the reception children working together in the shared activity area and the Year 1 pupils working in the classroom. However, these children could be working alongside those in the nursery at these times, as their classrooms are adjacent to each other. This would provide good opportunities for all children in the Foundation Stage to work together for part of the week.
- 27 A particularly noteworthy feature of teaching is the very good management of pupils. In the vast majority of lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour were very good. This ensures that all groups of pupils can work and learn in positive learning environments, with the minimum of fuss and disruption. Throughout the school, the vast majority of lessons are generally harmonious and purposeful, so that learning is a pleasurable experience. Relationships are excellent between the staff and the pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> The oldest children in the Foundation Stage aged 5 years.

Pupils and teachers often enjoy humour in lessons, and can laugh at themselves and each other without feeling uncomfortable.

- 28 The best lessons are very well planned, and the pace of learning is crisp. Teachers have a clear structure to follow and know how much time they have to work through the different elements of their plan. When combined with good subject knowledge underpinning clear explanations, the impact on pupils is that they make very good progress. Teaching of this quality was observed in a Year 6 English lesson. The structured planning was provided by the recommended framework of the 'literacy hour' and enabled the teacher to achieve a good balance between direct teaching, opportunities for pupils to work independently or in small groups, and time to review what had been learned at the end of the session. The lesson had very clear objectives and these were shared with the pupils. The work was very well structured so that all pupils built upon their previous knowledge.
- 29 All teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set them challenging work that is suited to their individual needs. The school also achieves high quality work in art, physical education and geography. This is because staff expectations in these subjects are high. For example, in an excellent Year 2 dance lesson, pupils were able to achieve a high level of performance because the teacher kept challenging them to improve their own movement. They then combined these movements to produce short dance sequences of very good quality. Year 3 pupils were set a difficult task in geography, tackled it with enthusiasm and achieved very good results because the teacher had high expectations of what they could achieve, and supported the tasks well.
- 30 Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are supported in lessons and are able to learn alongside their peers. The good teamwork between all staff and volunteers, and the quality of planning, ensure that the best use is made of extra adult support when it is available in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were given the task of organising paragraphs. The teacher ensured that lower attaining pupils were able to take part in the lesson by providing subtitles for a sorting activity. She and the support assistant intervened at appropriate points in the lessons to clarify and support these pupils without providing them with the answers. In this way all pupils were able to take part fully in the task and share with the rest of the class what they had done.
- 31 The school benefits from a number of teachers with specialist subject knowledge, and good use is made of this expertise by arranging the timetable so that teachers work with a number of different classes during the week. For instance, specialist teaching was observed in both physical education and music. In addition team teaching is a common feature. For example, pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 work on common topic themes and pupils sometimes work together. This ensures that teachers learn from each other, share their expertise and pupils benefit from working together socially.
- 32 The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Pupils in the mixed age classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are now taught in single age classes for English and mathematics. This is enabling teachers to challenge the most able pupils well, and to provide additional extra support for the slower learners by using the teaching assistants effectively. However, teachers agree they should now focus additional support on the small numbers of pupils who are slightly below average in mathematics and who need help to develop their skills in problem solving.
- 33 Concerns were expressed at the parents' meeting about the amount and level of homework. The inspection found that teachers make satisfactory use of homework to

extend pupils' learning. Work is usually marked regularly, and the majority of teachers use marking to praise and encourage pupils.

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

- 34 The curriculum is well structured and provides a broad range of relevant and exciting learning opportunities for all pupils. The curriculum is much better organised than it was at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum has been carefully organised so that pupils in mixed aged classes have equal access to the breadth of the curriculum and subjects are adequately covered. The detail of the long-term plan is clearly documented to provide teachers with a secure base for their planning. There are some particularly strong elements to the curriculum, for example physical education, especially provision for swimming, and information and communication technology, which is used very well to support learning across the curriculum. Literacy skills and mathematical skills are well taught and there is a good emphasis on investigation skills in science, which has brought about some high standards in recent years. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned, and adequate time is allocated for it. For example, in a Year 1/2 lesson pupils were taught about keeping safe in the context of medicines and other drugs.
- 35 The quality and range of learning opportunities for children at the Foundation Stage is very good. All six areas of learning are covered and there is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and in developing children's personal and social skills. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and for working to the National Curriculum. Children in reception are in a mixed aged class with Year 1 pupils. These pupils are often divided into groups for numeracy and literacy activities, with the reception children working together in the shared activity area and the Year 1 pupils working in the classroom. However, these reception children could be working alongside those in the nursery at these times, as their classrooms are adjacent to each other. This would provide good opportunities for all children in the Foundation Stage to work together on language and numeracy activities.
- 36 There is a particular emphasis on the creative and expressive arts, which results in high standards in this area and a positive effect on pupils' motivation and personal development. Art is very well taught, and displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment. Team teaching and the inspiration of the coordinator results in pupils enjoying the subject, having excellent attitudes towards it and producing work of a very high standard. There is also very good provision for music, drama and dance. For example, pupils have very good attitudes towards singing, and the school is well known in the local community for the quality of its concerts and performances. Of particular note are the special days and events when the whole school works on a particular theme; on these occasions, there is team teaching, and pupils of differing ages and abilities working together. Parents and pupils themselves comment on these as being highlights of the school year.
- 37 The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. Provision is mainly within the pupils' own classes and usually takes the form of differentiated work and the support of adults, as available. Good quality individual education plans, with realistic and achievable targets and ideas for teachers, parents and pupils themselves, ensure that individual needs are met. Some specific provision for special educational needs is provided. For example, the 'Toe by Toe' scheme of structured phonic learning is meticulously and regularly delivered by a teaching assistant, and is helping individual pupils make progress. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. The emphasis on a practical approach in subjects such as science and the

creative arts helps pupils who have other difficulties. For example in an art lesson, the achievement of a boy with special educational needs in Year 3 was recognised by the teacher and by the whole group, and this was just the kind of confidence boost that he needed.

- 38 The school provides very well for extra-curricular activities. A wide range of activities is offered, including music and sport. Teachers have a commitment to this and they give their time to it. Volunteers are also involved, for example the Chair of Governors, who runs a popular Nature Watch group. A range of clubs is provided at lunchtime, so that those pupils who live outside the village can take part in activities.
- 39 The school has strong links with the local community and with local schools. Some effective links enhance the curriculum and provide well for pupils' personal development. For example, the local vicar is a regular visitor, taking assemblies and talking to pupils. A local (and nationally known) actor comes in to read stories to pupils. Craftspeople share their skills and enthusiasm, inspiring pupils in their artwork. Local groups and individuals support sporting activities. The school belongs to a closely-knit pyramid of schools and benefits from this. Joint activities provide pupils with a greater range of experiences and the opportunity to work with other pupils. During the inspection week, Year 6 pupils spent a day at the secondary school taking part in a range of science activities. This was very successful and made a positive impact on pupils' personal development, as they shared activities with other pupils and made a good start to a successful transition to the next stage of their education.
- 40 There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a slight improvement on the last inspection when spiritual, moral and social development was very good and cultural development was good.
- 41 The very good provision for spiritual development is evident in the many opportunities pupils have in the day-to-day life of the school to reflect on its values. Lessons in religious education provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to explore the values and beliefs of other cultures and religions. A two-day focus has also taken place on India and the Hindu religion. The school has a policy for personal, social and health education, and a great part of the time spent on this area relates to understanding feelings and emotions. Older pupils show a mature and compassionate awareness of wider global issues. For example, Year 5 pupils discuss "news" items each week during geography lessons. Music is well used as pupils enter and leave assembly, and the music and its place in society are discussed. During the inspection, pupils listened to the music of Bob Marley, which was contrasted with the political situation in Jamaica at the time. Teachers encourage pupils to ask questions and allow them time to develop their own ideas. Good links exist across the curriculum, and pupils are able to make connections between aspects of their learning. For example, work in art and design technology is used to complement work on the Tudors in history.
- 42 The provision for moral and social development is very good. All children including those in the Foundation Stage are taught the principles of right and wrong, in their actions and the way they treat others. The police liaison officer visits the school on a regular basis. Written rules and sanctions do not feature prominently in classrooms, but pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers provide many opportunities during the school day for pupils to work together in a variety of ways with good opportunities for pupils to talk things through together or to take part in class discussion. The school encourages pupils to put their ideas for improving the school in a suggestion box and these are then considered by the School Council. Achievement charts celebrate good work. Older pupils are provided with the opportunity to take on responsibilities, including supporting

younger pupils in the playground. The School Council fulfils a fundraising role organising a *bad hair day* and a *bring-and-buy* sale.

- 43 The provision for cultural development is very good and a significant improvement on provision at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum reflects many aspects of the pupils' own culture, and visits are made to local galleries and museums. Pupils recently made a contribution to an exhibition at Sutton Hoo. Outstanding use is made of artists and craftsmen, both local and national, in the development of the art curriculum. There are also many opportunities to look at the work of artists from other cultures, including aboriginal art. Religious education lessons make a valuable contribution to the cultural development of pupils as they appreciate the cultural tradition within other world faiths. There are regular visits from religious leaders including pastoral visits from the local churches.

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

- 44 The school has succeeded very well in creating a caring supportive environment. All pupils, whatever their ability, flourish and develop in an atmosphere that supports and values each individual, including those who have special needs.
- 45 Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The policy for health and safety is securely in place, and the school is aware that it needs to be re-evaluated as part of the cycle of review. The responsible governor regularly monitors the premises, and the governing body has recently taken decisions on obtaining regular external audits. On a day-to-day basis, the school caretaker is diligent in ensuring a safe environment. Risk assessment is regularly and appropriately completed before undertaking visits out of school. Sufficient members of staff are trained in first aid, and appropriate procedures are in place to record and monitor accidents. Pupils are given very good opportunities through the personal, social and health education curriculum to learn about their own safety. For example, a Year 1/2 lesson on drugs education was very sensitively taught during the inspection.
- 46 Child protection procedures are firmly in place, and the policy is well established. The headteacher is the named responsible person, and he has received full training. The pyramid of local schools has planned a full staff-training day in the autumn to further develop staff knowledge and expertise. The headteacher and staff are very sensitive to pupils' actions and are alert to any concerns.
- 47 The school has very good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The policy is reflected fully in the school's practice. The school achieves its aim of encouraging self-discipline, good manners and consideration for others. Sanctions and rewards are well understood by all pupils, and they are particularly pleased when awarded with achievement points and certificates. The school has strategies in place to manage poor behaviour, although these are seldom required. The school's strategies for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good, as reflected in discussions with pupils. Instances of bullying or racial harassment are infrequent but are carefully recorded when they do occur. Pupils report that they feel safe and secure in and out of the classroom and can go to any staff for help.
- 48 There are very good procedures for monitoring and analysing attendance. The school secretary carefully monitors attendance and any concerns are quickly followed up. Staff know their pupils and parents well, and this helps to promote a positive approach to attendance.

- 49 Monitoring of pupils' personal development is very good and is based on the very good relationships all staff have with their pupils. The school has a strategy of teachers teaching other classes, which ensures all pupils are well known to all staff. Through extra-curricular activities and assemblies, teachers know all pupils and constantly monitor their attitudes and social skills.
- 50 Assessment procedures are good and are used well to inform future planning and target the needs of pupils. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when assessment was one of the areas for improvement. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is very thorough, and progress is tracked from the moment the children enter the Nursery. In English, mathematics and science detailed information is collected from statutory and optional tests, from commercial tests the school uses and from observations. This information is analysed to track the performance of individual pupils, identify any trends and to take action. Recently the governors and the headteacher monitored the progress of boys and girls and different groups in the mixed age classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Results showed the best progress for the majority was when they were in single age classes. As a result of this analysis, the governors decided to appoint a part-time teacher to ensure that the core subjects are taught in single aged classes in the upper part of the school. This is enabling teachers to plan successfully to challenge the most able pupils well and to provide additional extra support for the slower learners by using the teaching assistants more effectively. However, teachers agree that recent performance data shows that they now need to focus additional support on the small numbers of pupils who are slightly below average who need help to develop their skills at problem solving. A similar analysis is now being carried out with the younger pupils in the mixed age classes for Years 1 and 2. These examples show how the school is using data successfully to change and adapt the curriculum, and to improve the teachers planning to meet the needs of pupils who work at different rates.
- 51 As well as the more formal assessments, teachers make good use of introductions in lessons to find out how much the pupils know and understand from previous learning. This helps them to shape lessons to meet the needs of the pupils and to challenge them appropriately. In the Foundation subjects, an innovative system of self-assessment by pupils is being introduced, and indications are that it will be very successful. By asking the question "What have I learned about ----?" the pupils are evaluating their own knowledge and assessing the success of the topic.
- 52 There are good assessment procedures used for identifying and diagnosing difficulties that pupils have. This results in a precise match to pupil needs in individual education plans. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored as they move through the school.

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

- 53 Parents have very positive views about the school, and the vast majority feel their children like school. All parents with knowledge of the school agree that their children make good progress and that teaching is good. Additionally, they all assert that the school is well led and managed. These views are supported by inspection findings. A minority of parents felt they are not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on and that the school does not work sufficiently closely with parents, and had concerns about the amount of homework. This is not supported by inspection evidence. The range and variety of information provided for parents, and the opportunities for meeting teachers and coming into school are very good. The governors have consulted widely through their own questionnaires, and have used this information to make changes to school routine. The use of homework was judged to be satisfactory.

- 54 The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and home is very good. Many parents come into school to support the work of teachers, and some attend weekly good work assemblies. The Friends of Fressingfield School help to strengthen the partnership between home and school. A large number of parents are enthusiastically involved in this association. They have raised a considerable amount of money, which is currently being used to purchase extra books for the library. Parents also receive a detailed termly curriculum overview to help them contribute to their children's learning.
- 55 The information provided for parents is very good in quality and quantity. The regular newsletters are informative and include suitable advance notification of dates. The combined school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents now meets statutory requirements and is very well written in a friendly informative style. The pupils' annual reports are very good overall and reflect the strong knowledge teachers have of their pupils. Teachers explain in very good detail what pupils know, understand and can do, and are consistent in reporting targets for improvement in mathematics and English. A particular innovative feature is the attitudes and behaviour summary box that identifies pupils' personal development through four categories: attention in class, co-operation with others, ability to follow instructions and personal organisation. Pupils also review what they have achieved, and outline their aspirations for the following year. This contributes very well to the partnership between parents, pupils and teachers in the learning process.
- 56 Parents are very happy with the provision for special educational needs. They feel that their children's difficulties are soon identified and supported. They are fully involved at every stage of monitoring and review.

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

- 57 The school is very well led by the headteacher. He manages the school effectively in close partnership with the governing body and has established very good links with parents. He knows his pupils very well and has a clear view of the future development of the school. All staff and governors ably support him. Teaching staff are committed to improving pupils' attainment and are good at reflecting critically on their practice. There are excellent relationships within the school, and a strong sense of teamwork is apparent amongst all staff.
- 58 The commitment of the chair of governors is considerable. Under his leadership the governing body is effectively organised and successfully fulfils its obligations in monitoring the work of the school. Its role in shaping the direction of the school is very good. Governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school; they frequently visit, and many work hard to provide practical help. For example, the chair of governor runs an environmental club for pupils on Saturday mornings and has organised an evening walk to spot nightjars on the surrounding farmland. Governors successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school. They are very active in holding the school to account for its performance and discussing ways in which standards may be improved. For instance, the national test results are very carefully analysed by the governors and headteacher. They consider that good quality data is essential to track and understand the school's progress within the context of considerable difference in cohort size, and significant imbalances between genders in some classes. All statutory requirements that were reviewed during the inspection were fully met.

59 Following the last inspection in March 1998, an action plan was prepared in response to the key issues identified for future improvement. All of the points contained in these key issues have been successfully addressed. They are as follows:

60 *Key Issue 1 – “Continue to develop schemes of work for teaching the programmes of study of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, recognising the implications of the changes coming into force from September 1998, and taking particular account of the progressive development of skills in science and design technology, of knowledge and skills in information technology, and of the need to incorporate multicultural education across the curriculum.”*

Progress has been good. The school has developed schemes of work and makes consistent use of national guidelines. Work is now carefully structured to ensure that it is well matched to pupils' differing needs. Multicultural education has also been successfully incorporated into the curriculum.

61 *Key Issue 2 – “ continue to incorporate these schemes of work into long term plans which ensure progression and continuity of learning.”*

Progress has been good. Teachers now plan together to ensure continuity and progression. Medium and long-term plans are regularly reviewed. Medium term plans have been successfully adapted to meet the needs of teaching and learning when pupils are taught in mixed age classes.

62 *Key Issue 3– “Refine assessment procedures so as to take account of requirements and opportunities in the new schemes of work and plans, and to continue to inform pupils' future learning”*

Progress has been good. Assessment procedures have been refined, and staff are now assessing pupils in line with the new schemes and plans.

63 *Key Issue 4 - “Ensure that resources are available to support the curriculum, particularly in respect of the library”.*

Progress has been good. The school library has been relocated, resources have been improved and now include computers for research using CD ROMs.

64 *Key Issue 5– “ amend the school's prospectus to fulfil statutory requirements”*

Progress has been very good. The prospectus meets requirements and includes the latest Governors' report to Parents. It makes good use of colour photographs and examples of pupils' work.

65 The school development plan is good. It sets out clear priorities for the future development of the school. The plan is securely based on evaluations of previous progress and contains good detail of targets to be achieved during the current year, which are successfully linked to the budget.

66 The school makes good use of its resources. Staff are effectively deployed and all available space is very well used. Very good use is made of the resources of the local community, including the skills and talents of its governors and parents. Very good links with local schools help to enrich the curriculum for pupils and provide a forum for professional development for teachers. Finances are carefully managed, and the effects of spending decisions are closely monitored. The carry forward figure for 2002/3 was 5.4 per cent and included money set aside for the improvements to information

technology. The predicted figure for the current financial a year is around 2.6 per cent, which is well within the recommended limits.

- 67 The day-to-day management of the school is effective. The school secretary is hardworking and efficient and enables teachers to focus on their work in the classrooms rather than spend time on routine administrative tasks. She is a good ambassador for the school, as she is responsible for greeting visitors and parents and dealing with school routine when the headteacher is in the classroom.
- 68 Funding for additional teaching support has been used to reduce the need for mixed aged classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This initiative considerably benefits the pupils and enables pupils to be taught separately for most of their English and mathematics lessons. However, the school is likely to lose a teacher at the end of the school year through voluntary redundancy. In order to maintain this initiative, the school plans to increase the headteacher's teaching commitment to four days a week. This will place additional pressure on him to find time for administrative duties and to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Well-trained learning support assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and give very good support to teachers.
- 69 The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is good, and this has improved the quality of teaching when compared to the previous inspection, where it was judged to be satisfactory. This important role is shared between the headteacher, local authority inspectors and subject coordinators, and has had a direct effect on the quality of learning and on the progress pupils are making overall. The school has plans to extend these activities, but realises that the time available may be reduced with the introduction of new staffing arrangements.
- 70 The special needs coordinator has well-established procedures for the provision for pupils with special educational needs. She has taken account of the new Code of Practice and provides meticulous records. There is a range of good quality support staff, whose work is well integrated with that of the class teachers, and they make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The governors are investigating systems that could help those with sight or hearing loss.
- 71 Planning for school improvement is good, and reflects the aims of the school. There is a clear framework for development planning linked to the budget cycle. Effective systems are in place to monitor progress towards development priorities, and these culminate in an annual review and update of the plan.
- 72 The school plans its expenditure effectively. The governors are well informed about finance, and principles of best value are satisfactorily applied through the use of cost comparators and effective tendering arrangements which ensure competition. They make good use of the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target their spending strategically. Good quality data supplied by the local education authority helps governors make these comparisons. Governors use this information to make careful financial plans to secure future improvements in standards.
- 73 Performance management provides a good focus for developing individual members of staff, and all the teaching staff have clear performance targets. Information gathered from this work gives the headteacher a good view of the strengths to be shared and weaknesses to be remedied. A strong commitment to self-evaluation pervades the work of the school.

- 74 Overall the standard of accommodation is good. The school has the added benefit of a purpose built Nursery, which provides light, airy and spacious accommodation for the under fives. There are numerous, colourful, good quality displays around the school, and buildings and grounds are well maintained. Storage space is at a premium, and all available areas are very well used for this purpose. Overall, stocks of books and equipment are adequate and enable all subjects to be taught effectively. The recent investment in information technology is giving pupils access to the Internet for research, and laptop computers are being used very well in classrooms to support learning across the curriculum.
- 75 A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the quality of leadership and the good improvement made since the last inspection, show that the school is effective and, when its expenditure per pupil is considered, it provides good value for money.

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

In order for the school to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) raise standards in mathematics and writing by:
  - increasing the opportunities for writing across the curriculum  
[paragraphs: 10,91,96,98,136,140,165,167]
  - targeting and supporting specific groups of pupils to develop their mathematical skills in problem solving particularly in Years 3 to 6.  
[paragraphs: 26,50,79]
- (2) provide more opportunities for the children in the reception class and the nursery to work together.  
[paragraphs: 26,35,78,80]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	12	16	2	0	0	0
Percentage	11.8	35.3	47.1	5.9	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	131
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR- Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	12

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	15	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (38)	92 (69)	96 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	24	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (69)	96 (75)	100 (88)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	9	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	12	10	13
	Total	20	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (83)	73 (78)	85 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	7	6
	Girls	10	8	10]
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (88)	60 (76)	64 (94)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	113	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	26.2

#### **Education support staff: YR - Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2002/3
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	£
Total income	397,040
Total expenditure	404,663
Expenditure per pupil	2,830
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,500
Balance carried forward to next year	20,877

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	143
Number of questionnaires returned	63

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	35	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	54	0	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	54	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	49	13	2	10
The teaching is good.	63	35	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	52	16	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	33	6	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	25	56	13	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	44	52	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	30	13	0	3

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

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

- 76 The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Children in the Foundation Stage are divided between the nursery and Class 1. Children enter the nursery with average levels of attainment and by the time they are ready to transfer into the reception class the majority of them will have achieved practically all the Early Learning Goals in the different areas of learning. This means that the children are learning well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the quality of support they receive in all activities.
- 77 Strengths in provision are:
- the progress children make towards the Early Learning Goals in the nursery,
  - the planning of a rich and interesting curriculum,
  - assessment procedures,
  - procedures for the induction of children into the Foundation Stage.
- 78 Area for development:
- provide more opportunities for the Foundation Stage children to work together.
- 79 The majority of children have four terms in the nursery before moving into the reception/Year 1 class, at the beginning of the term in which they become five. Arrangements for a smooth induction into the Foundation Stage are very good. There are very good links with the feeder playgroups, and the nursery teacher visits them to meet and get to know the children. Meetings are arranged with the parents so that they can be informed about routines and what life will be like for their children when they join the nursery. A book about the nursery tells parents who the teachers will be and gives helpful ideas about how they can help by understanding the kind of curriculum their children will be taught in the different terms. Details about how assessments will be carried out are also included, as are the procedures for passing information to parents about how well their children are progressing. Once the children have started in the nursery, they are very carefully assessed so that the teachers know what they can do and can plan appropriate activities. These assessments, in each of the six areas of learning, are regularly updated and are then used to plan children's work when they move onto National Curriculum studies in Year 1. Assessment procedures are very good.
- 80 Class 1 consists of the reception children<sup>2</sup> and pupils in Year 1. These pupils are often divided into groups with the reception children working together in the shared activity area, and the Year 1 pupils working in the classroom. However, these children could be working alongside those in the nursery at these times, as their classrooms are adjacent to each other. This would provide good opportunities for all children in the Foundation Stage to work together.
- 81 Teaching in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It is never less than satisfactory and often very good, with observations of excellent teaching made in the nursery. It is the high quality of teaching in the nursery that enables all the children to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Throughout the Foundation Stage, planning is good, and the support staff and nursery nurse are involved in all stages of planning, having very clear roles and responsibilities during activities. They

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<sup>2</sup> The oldest children in the Foundation Stage aged 5 years.

make a significant contribution to the children's learning. The planned curriculum is lively, challenging and interesting for the children. The current work on the seaside in reception has interesting activities in all the areas of learning and engages children in a wide range of experiences. Throughout the Foundation Stage relationships with the children are excellent, the teachers really value everything the children do and use praise and encouragement to raise their self-esteem and confidence.

- 82 The coordinator has a clear understanding of how things need to develop and of the importance of finding more opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to work together. The Foundation Stage has its own development plan which identifies targets for future development and clearly focuses on improving provision for the children.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

- 83 Children make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills, and in this area of learning they achieve all of the Early Learning Goals, including those children who have special educational needs. A significant feature is the care children show for each other and the way they look after one another. For example, one little boy trapped his fingers whilst folding a piece of apparatus and began to cry. Immediately another child came forward to comfort him, and stroked his arm. Snack time is not just a time for milk, but also a time when they share the fruit with each other and learn not to be greedy. A visit from the dental nurse helps the children to learn about dental hygiene and encourages them to care for their own teeth. This is re-enforced with displays in the classroom. The adults provide excellent role models for the children, and are kind and considerate at all times.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

- 84 The provision for the development of children's language and literacy skills is good throughout the Foundation Stage. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage the majority of children have attained the Early Learning Goals. By the end of the reception, the higher attaining children are writing two or three sentences with the correct use of a capital letter and full stop, and they are reading from the school scheme. Children make sound progress, including those with special educational needs. In the nursery, the high quality of teaching ensures that every opportunity is taken to engage the children in conversation, share books with them and develop a real love of stories and words. For example, at the beginning of the morning all the children were together sitting round the teacher's suitcase that was packed for her holiday. They began by guessing what was in the suitcase, and the activity ended with the children re-packing it and listing what they had put in. This activity provided many good opportunities for writing, reading and discussion. Throughout the Foundation Stage there is very good use of display to emphasise the joy of language and to bring words into the everyday lives of the children. Children in reception are able to address a postcard with the help of their teachers as part of the project on holidays. They are also encouraged to take home frequently used words so they can learn them with the help of their parents.

### **Mathematical development**

- 85 The provision for children's mathematical development is good and the children are taught well. Through a range of interesting, practical activities the majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their learning. In the nursery, wherever possible, the children's learning is linked to other aspects of their work. Following the whole class session on the carpet, looking at what the teacher had packed in her case for her holiday, the teacher asked children, in groups of three, to join her at one of the larger tables. On the table was a large pile of items to be taken on a holiday

and three suitcases, a small brightly patterned one, a medium size decorated one and a large grey one. The teacher then asked, "We need to take all these items on holiday with us, but which case should we use?" The children initially liked the small brightly patterned case, but slowly realised that it did not have the maximum carrying capacity. In the reception seaside café, children were taking orders for food and drink and collecting money in payment. Good use is also made of registration times to count children and to sing songs about the days of the week. Children have a very positive attitude to their learning in mathematics because the activities are enjoyable and they are well supported by adults.

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

- 86 Due to the wide range of experiences the children receive in the Foundation Stage, the majority of them achieve all the Early Learning Goals as a result of good teaching. Topics are carefully selected to give the children a broad range of practical experience. All the children in the Foundation Stage cover the same topics, but work is carefully matched to meet the needs of children at different stages of development. For example, there are good opportunities for children to grow plants and seeds, to see how materials change when making fudge, and to celebrate festivals such as Divali. Good use is made of visits, such as to the seaside, Banham Zoo, and the '*Inspire Discovery Centre*' in Norwich, to bring the curriculum to life.

### **Physical development**

- 87 Provision for physical development is very good, with children having access to a large outdoor play area and the school gymnasium. All the children, including those with special educational needs, achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area as a result of good teaching. The children have access to a wide range of equipment that encourages confidence and initiative and helps them learn to play together. They climb over and under apparatus, practise balancing on a frame, and use large and small wheeled toys to develop coordination and awareness of space. The children are very fortunate in having access to the school swimming pool where they can develop water confidence by playing a variety of games. A range of good quality construction kits helps them to use their hands with increasing control. Children in the nursery use hammer and nails with confidence to put together wooden patterns, whilst children in the reception class build boats, lighthouses and beach huts using reclaimed materials.

### **Creative development**

- 88 This is an area where the majority of children achieve all the Early Learning Goals and produce some examples of excellent work. This is due to very good quality teaching. nursery children have used paint and tissue with confidence to produce stunning examples of paintings in the style of Monet. Not only do they paint with confidence, but they also explore texture and materials using tie-dye to investigate changes to colour and tone. Children make clay vases, balsa wood aeroplanes, hot air balloons and models of fish using old plastic bottles. They are confident at using colour and texture because of the very good support and encouragement they receive from all adults. Children also enjoy singing and using the percussion instruments. The oldest children confidently use a range of percussion instruments to represent the sounds of the sea and the seashore. Role-play is an important aspect of creative development, and adults exploit its use to develop children's imaginations.

## ENGLISH

- 89 Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, speaking and listening are above average across the school, and in writing they are average. Standards in English are usually good. Over the last few years the standards achieved by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have been at least in line with, and often above or well above the national average. Evidence from performance data and from the inspection shows that pupils generally achieve well, and at least as well if not better than pupils in similar schools. However, standards are currently lower than they have been. This can partly be explained by the balance of the particular cohorts involved. For example, the number of pupils who have difficulties with literacy can differ from year to year, and this can have a significant impact on the results achieved by small cohorts. This is the case for this group of pupils. The fact that standards in reading are better than those in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2, also affects the overall performance in English.
- 90 Strengths:
- standards in reading are good and pupils achieve well,
  - teaching is good throughout the school,
  - support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning,
  - good standards in speaking and listening help pupils' achievement across the curriculum.
- 91 Area for development:
- standards in writing are not high enough.
- 92 Standards in reading are good. As a result of identifying a dip in standards, the school has recently focused on reading and made changes to the way in which it is taught, for example by introducing a regular guided group reading session. There has also been considerable investment in books, which has had a positive impact on pupils' motivation and achievement. These strategies have been successful and now most pupils achieve the expected levels and a significant number achieve above this.
- 93 By the end of Year 2, pupils read simple texts fluently and accurately. They make good use of their knowledge of sounds in order to help them read unfamiliar words, and they usually understand their reading and can explain what books they like. By the end of Year 6, pupils respond to a wide range of books, showing good understanding of the text and describing their preferences. Pupils enjoy reading and make the most of opportunities to talk about what they have read and liked.
- 94 The basic skills of reading are well taught. From an early age, pupils are taught sounds and how these are linked to form letters and words. These skills are developed well throughout the school and progress is carefully monitored. Those pupils who are identified as having problems with reading are given regular additional support by teaching assistants. This has been successful in raising standards. Guided group reading activities have also been successful in supporting the development of reading skills. Teachers plan them very carefully so that all groups of pupils are suitably challenged. They also ensure there is a good balance between teaching time and independent tasks. In this way, pupils are given the confidence to tackle texts that are harder than they could manage on their own, which raises their expectations.
- 95 Speaking and listening skills are good in the school. Pupils listen particularly well, to each other as well as to the teacher, and they are often given the opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills in 'talking pairs' or in group and class discussions. These skills support pupils' achievement in other subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils

were able to discuss environmental issues in a geography lesson, and this helped to make the learning more meaningful and effective.

- 96 Standards in writing are average. By the end of Year 2 most pupils write independently, plan a story and use imaginative language. They mostly write legibly and are fairly accurate in spelling and punctuation. Although the skills have been well taught, pupils have not always had enough opportunity to consolidate them in extended writing tasks. By the end of Year 6, pupils can organise a piece of non-narrative writing by sorting facts into paragraphs and can suggest connectives that could be used when sequencing the sentences. Scrutiny of their work shows they understand how to write for a range of different purposes and in a variety of formats, such as letters, poetry, and narratives. Pupils have certainly been given a wide range of opportunities to learn these skills and have been well taught in imaginative ways. However, in some cases their basic skills, for example spelling and punctuation, are not secure and this mars their work. Again, pupils have been taught the skills but have not had enough opportunity to consolidate them in extended writing sessions. These weaknesses have not always been picked up at an early enough stage, as assessment and tracking procedures have not been as rigorous in writing as they are in reading. However, the school is aware of the problem, and the coordinator has put into place some good new assessment procedures. These changes are already having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Teachers are now tracking individuals' progress methodically using performance descriptors, and using this information well to plan activities that are matched to pupils' individual needs.
- 97 There is currently some good teaching in writing, with teachers taking an imaginative approach that motivates pupils and keeps them interested. This was exemplified in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were studying advertisements. The teacher used a good range of advertising material, including examples on the computer, which resulted in a high level of discussion and some very challenging activities. Pupils were very involved, enjoyed the activity, and achieved the objectives well. Similarly in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher gave pupils facts to organise under subtitles. This task was carefully matched to the full range of abilities and enabled all groups of pupils to make good progress. The teachers' very good subject knowledge and imaginative teaching methods has a positive impact on pupils' interest and the rate at which they make progress.
- 98 Pupils in the mixed age classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are now taught in single age classes. This is enabling teachers to challenge the most able pupils well, and to provide additional extra support for the slower learners by using the teaching assistants more effectively. This is the result of a detailed study of the achievement of boys and girls and different groups by the headteacher and governors, which showed that pupils in single age classes made the best progress. Previously, in an effort to implement the National Literacy Strategy effectively in mixed age classes, there had been a tendency to group pupils quite rigidly by age rather than by need, and this had reduced the amount of time to write purposefully across the curriculum. Pupils are now gaining these skills, but opportunities for extended writing could be increased further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 99 The standards in mathematics in Year 2 are average. Nearly all the pupils should reach the level appropriate to their age in the National Curriculum tests for Year 2. In addition about a third of the pupils will probably achieve above the national average. This is broadly in line with the figure achieved nationally. Currently, the standards in Year 6 are in line with those required of pupils in their last year of primary education. This represents a good improvement, since results have been below or well below average for the last four years. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

100 Strengths are:

- the good quality of teaching across the school,
- the good assessment procedures in place in Year 6,
- the good quality of marking,
- homework is set regularly in Year 5 and 6.

101 Areas for development:

- the targeting and supporting of specific groups to develop skills in problem solving.

102 Pupils in Year 2 are able to find the answers to simple sums mentally. They quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 10, sequence numbers to a hundred and understand place values up to at least a hundred. More able pupils can count in 2s, 5s and 10s and are able to count on and back from a given number. Higher attaining pupils solve number problems involving multiplication and division. The majority of pupils can name simple 2 and 3 dimensional shapes. They recognise a cube, pyramid and sphere and talk about sides, corners, edges and faces. Pupils solve problems involving money and use Venn diagrams and bar charts to illustrate information.

103 The oldest pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of the place value of large numbers. They understand decimals and do successful calculations involving the use of the decimal point. Pupils use a range of strategies to solve problems, recognising key vocabulary when tackling problems involving real-life situations. They use a wide vocabulary when talking about quadrilaterals and have a sound understanding of angles. Pupils handle data, using bar charts and block graphs to illustrate findings in design technology and science.

104 The quality of teaching is good. Of the five lessons seen, four were good and one was very good. Teachers plan activities well and have very clear lesson objectives. They use a good range of teaching methods and manage pupils well. They make good use of the time and work well with support staff.

105 In a Year 1/2 lesson the teacher dealt well with a very wide range of ability. She used subtraction as the theme for the mental mathematics and successfully adapted the activities for the whole ability range. Year 1 pupils then worked successfully with the teaching assistant whilst the teacher continued mental calculations with the Year 2 pupils. The pupils concentrated extremely well despite the fact that there was a lot going on around them. Group work was well organised, and all pupils had tasks that were well matched to their individual abilities. The Year 2 pupils then worked together in small groups and tested themselves to find out how much they had understood.

106 In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils showed very good levels of understanding about quadrilaterals. The teacher used good demonstration techniques to develop the understanding of mathematical nets and 3D shapes. The pupils then worked in groups, and the more able were given shape problems that challenged their understanding. Other pupils were investigating the shape of a cube to see how many different nets they could make. All pupils had good access to equipment and all worked with enthusiasm, cooperating well when necessary. Pupils were supported well by the teaching assistants during the group work activities. The teacher made very good use of the plenary session for pupils to talk about their successes and difficulties, and the pupils expressed themselves very well.

107 Pupils in the mixed age classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are now taught in single age classes for English and mathematics. This is enabling teachers to challenge the most able pupils well and to provide additional extra support for the slower learners by using

the teaching assistants more effectively. However, teachers agree they should now focus additional support on the small numbers of pupils who are slightly below average who need help to develop their skills at problem solving. The coordinator has also identified this concern, and already has a plan to address this need. Mathematics is being used well across the curriculum. For example, pupils analyse responses to questionnaires in geography and measure and analyse data in science. Pupils are now using computers well to support their work across a range of mathematical activities.

108 The mathematics coordinator is new to her role and has only been teaching for two years. She is introducing a number of new initiatives effectively. These include extending the range of teaching resources and increasing the monitoring of teaching and assessment.

## **SCIENCE**

109 Standards of attainment in science are above the national average at age eleven and in line with the national average at age seven. Pupils make satisfactory progress up to the age of seven and good progress to the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school because of the good support they receive.

110 Strengths in provision are:

- the well-planned curriculum for science,
- pupils' investigative skills are well developed,
- pupils' attitudes to science are very good.

111 Area for development:

- using laptop computers to record and analyse experimental data.

112 Due to the arrangement of the timetable, it was only possible to observe one lesson. However, the scrutiny of work and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils provided secure evidence of the standards of work being achieved, and that teaching and learning are good. When discussing their work, the pupils all stated how much they enjoyed science and talked at length and in great detail about the different things they had done.

113 Pupils in Year 6 have carried out investigations in many areas. They have a secure knowledge of living things, materials and physical processes, and their grasp of many scientific ideas, such as the differences in the properties of solids, liquids and gases and how to measure force, is good. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have good subject knowledge due to the good quality of the practical curriculum and the quality of the teaching. It is this secure subject knowledge that is enabling them to do so well in the national tests.

114 The enquiry skills of Year 6 pupils are well developed, and their understanding of basic enquiry approaches, such as fair testing and hypothesis testing, is very good, due the emphasis placed on developing these skills at an earlier age. In the very good science lesson on rocks and soils observed in Year 3, the pupils worked on three different investigations related to the properties of the different rocks. Each investigation began with a discussion about the test they were going to use and how they could ensure it was a fair test. They then systematically carried it out, recording their observations on a simple chart, and explained what their findings showed. By carefully building on previous experiences and then re-visiting them, the pupils become increasingly secure in their knowledge. This is clearly the case with the youngest pupils, whose work builds on the experiences they have had in the Foundation Stage. Although the pupils have looked at the life cycle of a frog in the nursery, they return to this study in Year 2 so that they can

study in greater depth and reinforce their earlier learning. A strong feature of the work in pupils' books was the quality of presentation and the care taken to record information clearly and accurately.

115 The quality of teaching is good and learning is good. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. The Year 3 lesson was very carefully planned, very well resourced and had an excellent balance between the input from the teacher and opportunities for pupils to discuss and experiment. Opportunities for discussion were well planned, and these were used to extend the pupils' vocabulary by introducing such words as 'permeable' to aid their understanding of what was happening. Because lessons are well planned and organised, pupils are able to go about their work sensibly and with purpose, and are provided with tasks that are well matched to their individual abilities, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers.

116 The science co-ordinator is new to the post but is full of enthusiasm and has a very clear view of how the subject can develop in the future in order to raise standards and offer more challenge. In order to achieve this she intends to strengthen the work in data handling by getting pupils to record data directly onto the new laptop computers during experiments.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

117 Standards achieved by pupils are well above national expectations. These high standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are recognised by parents and the local community. The quality of the provision for the subject, the very good teaching and the high profile the subject has in the school, ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well.

118 Strengths:

- art and design is a major strength of the school and pupils achieve high standards,
- teachers are very skilled at teaching art and design, and they are expertly led by the enthusiastic coordinator.

119 Area for development:

- there are no areas for development.

120 The curriculum provides very well for pupils' cultural development, as they are given the opportunity to study the work of artists and craftspeople from different times and cultures, as well as work with artists in school. They visit galleries and find out about different genres and traditions. Currently pupils in Year 2 are using traditional Aboriginal patterns and symbols as a basis for their own work. This is being developed further in Years 3 and 4, as pupils study modern Aboriginal art and consider how the combination of colours and shapes reflect the lives of the people and their environment.

121 By the age of seven, pupils have used a good variety of materials, and processes such as printing, dyeing, painting and drawing. They use ideas and information well in developing their work, for example studying Aboriginal art as a basis for their work on surface decoration. They comment on differences in each other's work and suggest ways of improving their own.

122 By the age of 11, pupils confidently collect and explore ideas to help them in their own work. For example, they gathered detailed information and a wide range of visual images of shoes before designing and making their own ornamental shoe. They modified and improved their work to demonstrate their vision of its intention and meaning. Pupils are also confident at sharing ideas and meanings through their

manipulation of materials and processes, mixing and arranging visual and tactile qualities for specific purposes, for example when using tissue collages and painting acetates in the style of Chris Ofili.

- 123 Pupils' attitudes to art and design are excellent. They are interested and keen to be involved. They work with concentration and take a pride in the quality of the finished article. Self-evaluation is an integral part of the way in which the subject is taught and pupils confidently evaluate their own work and the work of others. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils were examining the Aboriginal bowls they had made, and they were able to explain precisely what it was that worked in particular pieces: 'the colours make it stand out', and 'the patterns have been chosen carefully to maximise the effect.' Throughout the school, pupils appreciate the work done by others and recognise how well others have achieved.
- 124 The teaching of art and design is consistently very good. The teaching of basic skills is effective. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher had previously shown pupils how to manipulate clay and how to make a smooth surface. Pupils went on to use these skills to make a clay tile and explore the different marks that could be made by pressing found objects into the surface. This had been carefully planned to build on previous learning, and the pupils were extending and developing these skills during the lesson. Planning is good, and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were decorating didgeridoos that they had made. The teacher skilfully guided them to look at the patterns they had previously done and challenged them to develop their visual ideas within a new context. The pupils were inspired, and they soon started work developing new ideas. The teacher cleverly encouraged them, explaining how to evaluate and improve their work within a supportive working environment.
- 125 The coordinator is the inspiration for the rich art environment which is such a positive feature of the school. She has a high level of subject expertise, and this is evident in her excellent teaching. With the help of the local authority adviser the school has developed a rich and varied curriculum. There are opportunities for pupils to explore materials and techniques and to develop their ideas. Sketchbooks are used very well for the collection of information and the trying out of ideas, and opportunities for self-evaluation are an integral part of the curriculum. ICT is used well; pupils confidently use software to aid the designing process and happily use the Internet for research.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 126 Due to timetabling arrangements during the inspection week, no design and technology lessons were seen. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that attainment in the subject is in line with expectations by the age of seven and above expectations by the age of eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be average at seven and eleven.
- 127 Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in the remaining years, including those pupils with special educational needs.
- 128 Strengths in the subject are:
- the development of skills in planning and making,
  - the very positive attitudes pupils have to their work,
  - the management of the subject.
- 129 Through a carefully planned programme of projects, pupils are introduced to a range of activities which cover using textiles, food technology, mechanisms, structures and

electronics. By the time they are 11, pupils have developed skills in designing and making a variety of products. They think through the purpose they want their product to serve and when they have finished it they carry out a detailed evaluation of their work, looking at the original specification and how closely they have matched this with the finished product. They are able to measure, mark out and cut the required shapes from a range of available materials and join them using a variety of techniques. They are well aware of the necessity for hygiene and safety and are able to identify when things have worked well.

130 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build on the work they have done in the Foundation Stage. They learn about different ways of getting things to fasten together by using brass fastenings, gluing things together and by using stitches when working with fabric. They learn about the different properties of materials so that they can make correct choices when designing their product. They also look at materials that are decorative or shiny and those that will stretch and be easier to work with. The sock puppets they make are a delight and show how they can use their knowledge in an imaginative way to produce interesting and creative results.

131 Pupils in Year 3 have designed a bag to hold a calculator. Their drawings are detailed and show how the shape, design and structure of bags vary according to their purpose. They also decided on the external decoration, which included a simple graphic, and carefully considered the materials and tools they were going to need to complete the task. Pupils are able to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of various closures and fastenings, and used this information to choose a suitable mechanism for their own products. In Year 5, pupils have designed torches and have used their scientific knowledge to design and build their own electrical circuits. A careful study of the initial design drawings shows how the project has evolved over time. This is well illustrated with digital photographs demonstrating the finished products. The older pupils in Year 6 have investigated pneumatic and hydraulic mechanisms. For example, one pupil had made a detailed design for a trap door, which was powered by pneumatics. A balloon was inflated to open the trap door, and deflated to close it again. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to evaluate their work in great detail, and can successfully highlight strengths and weaknesses of their design. They use this knowledge well to overcome problems when making improvements to the final product

132 When talking to pupils about their work in design technology they showed a very positive attitude to their work and spoke with enthusiasm, indicating that the subject was well planned with appropriate experiences for the pupils. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic and keen co-ordinator who values the work put in by the teachers and the good quality work produced by the pupils.

## **HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

133 Standards in Year 2 are above expectations in history and geography. Standards in geography are above those in other schools by end of Year 6. However, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in history. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress because of the good support they receive during lessons.

134 In Years 1 and 2, history and geography form part of the themed topic. In Years 3 to 6, the geography and history curriculum is arranged in a two-year cycle and is taught along with religious education, so that pupils are either working on history, geography or religious education. During the inspection pupils in Years 3 to 6 were working on geography.

135 Strengths:

- good history teaching in Years 1 and 2,
- good geography teaching in Years 3 to 6,
- all work in history and geography is well linked to other curriculum areas,
- good use of resources, including human resources.

136 Area for development:

- make more use of extended writing in history in Years 3 to 6.

137 By the end of Year 2, pupils learn about other places in the world and compare these locations with their own environment. They are able to discuss in detail the differences between their village and the seaside town they had visited. Pupils can locate these places on a map, and describe their physical features. In history, they are able to describe what life was like fifty and a hundred years ago and can compare it with life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They learn about famous people such as Florence Nightingale and make studies of life in the more distant past, for example through looking at castles.

138 By Year 6, most pupils have developed a good understanding of the world and are able to talk about continents, countries, mountains, oceans and seas. They know about the countries they have studied in geography and can describe significant historical events. For example, pupils were able to talk about the features of modern Greece, as well as ancient Greece and its classical historical figures. Pupils also have a good knowledge about the effect people have on the environment and are able to discuss local issues relating to traffic and house building. Pupils are developing a good understanding of maps and symbols and can accurately use a key and coordinates. They study a range of famous people in some detail. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to talk about the life of Nelson Mandela and understood the main events of his life and the effect this has had on the political and social history of South Africa.

139 The quality of teaching and learning in history is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers use their own very good understanding of history to encourage pupils to develop enquiring minds. Pupils were able to talk about a recent visit from a villager who talked to them about seaside holidays in the past. They were able to put this on a timeline in relation to photos of holidays a hundred years ago and fifty years ago. The teachers enabled pupils to develop an empathy with the past through the good use of drama to highlight the differences between life now and a hundred years ago.

140 The quality of teaching and learning in geography is also good. The lesson observed in Years 3/4 class showed that pupils were confident when talking about their own environment, including the issues relating to a proposed new local housing development. The teacher skilfully linked the village with the world through the use of large-scale maps of the local area, aerial photos and satellite maps. Pupils were able to locate local features on the map and became very animated when they located their own houses. Pupils in Year 5 used their growing geographical knowledge and understanding to address local environmental issues. There were also some good examples of the use of ICT and the Internet for historical and geographical research by groups and individuals. For example, pupils used the computer well to develop their own questionnaires to gauge local opinion about increased traffic flows. Others were writing letters about the proposed new housing, and a third group were designing their own ideal village. A very good feature of both lessons was the way two teachers worked together to achieve the maximum effect. However, the scrutiny of work shows there are missed opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing in history in some classes in Years 3 to 6.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY [ICT]**

- 141 There were limited opportunities to see direct teaching of ICT during the inspection, as most of the ICT activities were integrated within other lessons. Evidence was obtained by direct observation, from displays, by the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans, and through discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils work hard, listen carefully to their teachers and achieve well.
- 142 Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations by the age of seven years, and above average by eleven. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. However, requirements have changed considerably since then, and the school has made good progress in meeting them. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, and there are no significant differences in attainment between girls and boys.
- 143 Strengths in the subject are:
- the provision of a new laptop computers and a wireless network,
  - revisions of planning to include a wider coverage of ICT skills in all subjects,
  - the introduction of ICT lessons for all classes to develop skills and competencies.
- 144 Area for development:
- to extend the opportunities for sending and receiving email.
- 145 Information technology is well integrated into other subjects, and is used very well to support teaching and learning. However, the coordinator intends to improve provision even further by revisiting schemes of work and systematically identifying further opportunities for ICT. Pupils have lessons in basic information technology skills, after which they learn to use these skills to support work in other subjects of the curriculum.
- 146 Opportunities are being regularly identified in English, mathematics and science, as well as the foundation subjects<sup>3</sup>. The range of activities offered to all pupils is now good. For example, they are using spreadsheets to collect and interpret data in mathematics, and to control events such as the traffic lights. A very good scheme of work has been introduced which is based on official guidelines. This is supported by satisfactory procedures for checking pupils' progress. Teachers keep careful records of what pupils can do and are using this information to support pupils' learning and plan subsequent work for them.
- 147 In English, pupils use word processing skills to present their writing. Pupils know how to change the size of fonts and alter the quality of text, for example by selecting "bold". Older pupils can check text for accuracy, redraft their work and merge graphics to illustrate their writing. In mathematics and science, they have used spreadsheets to manage information and to improve their arithmetic. Pupils have also experimented with musical sequences to produce simple tunes.
- 148 Internet access and the use of the Internet have increased since the introduction of the new laptops, and the skills in using and adapting the information have also improved. Pupils now eagerly use the Internet to research information for projects, for example in science, geography and history. However, opportunities for sending and receiving email are at an early stage of development.
- 149 The quality of teaching is good. Although it was only possible to see ICT being taught directly to pupils in Year 3 to 6, conversations with pupils and the scrutiny of work showed the quality of teaching is good. In the two lessons observed, the teachers' very

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<sup>3</sup> These are subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

good subject knowledge enabled her to lead the activities with confidence, giving clear instructions to the class and skilfully ensuring that all pupils were involved. She moved from group to group helping, clarifying, challenging and moving pupils on to the next task. The pupils responded very well to the teachers' high expectations of their work and behaviour. The teaching methods used were effective, and enabled all pupils to achieve well. Whenever pupils were seen working on the computers, their response was always very good. They are enthusiastic and work very well together, supporting each other.

150 The implementation of the school's inclusion policy ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, have full access to the curriculum and appropriate support. Suitable restrictions are in place to safeguard pupils' access to the Internet.

## **MUSIC**

151 Music is developing well in the school, and the new and enthusiastic coordinator is maintaining the quality of provision achieved at the time of the last inspection. Due to the arrangement of the timetable, it was only possible to observe work in a Year 2 class, but evidence from assemblies and other contexts indicates that singing is a strength of the school's provision. Scrutiny of planning and discussions with pupils and teachers show that the school is meeting National Curriculum requirements. Performance is a feature of the school's work that is well regarded by parents and spoken of enthusiastically by pupils themselves. Pupils sing well, often unaccompanied. They accurately keep to a tune and have a good sense of rhythm. They sing two part and four part rounds, well aware of the way in which they are contributing to the whole effect. The school has made good progress at enriching the curriculum with musical and dramatic performances.

152 Strengths in provision are:

- pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm,
- Year 2 pupils achieve good standards as they explore how music can be created,
- there are opportunities for pupils of all ages to sing in a choir.

153 Year 2 pupils achieve good standards in music. In one lesson, they were creating music to describe a seaside environment, and they confidently used a wide range of musical instruments to explore how sounds could be organised. They knew that the musical elements could be combined to create different effects, such as crashing waves and squawking birds. The confidence with which pupils worked and the level at which they could evaluate what they were doing, showed good standards were being achieved.

154 The coordinator for music runs two choirs, which provide the opportunity for pupils of all ages to involve themselves in a group activity outside lesson time. The choirs are well supported by boys as well as girls. They sing enthusiastically, setting a high standard for singing in the school. This contributes well to the pupils' range of experience and to their personal development, and raises the profile of music in the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION [PE]**

155 It was not possible to see the full range of PE activities during the inspection, and there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgment about standards in all aspects of the subject. However, scrutiny of planning and discussions with pupils and teachers show that the school is meeting National Curriculum requirements. Standards in dance were very good in the single lesson observed in Year 1/2. Standards in games were good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. It was not possible to see gymnastics being taught across the school, and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about standards

in this discipline. By the age of 11, standards in swimming are very good. There was only sufficient evidence to make a secure judgment about the quality of teaching for pupils aged seven to eleven years.

156 Strengths:

- the quality of teaching and learning,
- pupils' behaviour and attitudes,
- the range of activities.

157 The physical education curriculum is very good, and offers a well-balanced programme of activities to ensure that pupils develop a good range of skills and abilities. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the activities and make good progress.

158 Attainment in swimming is well above average. Records provided by the school show that by the time they leave the school all pupils have achieved the national target of being able to swim at least 25 metres. Sixteen out of twenty have also gained personal safety certificates for swimming.

159 Pupils achieved very good standards in creative dance in a lesson observed in Year 1/2. In this excellent lesson, the teacher's careful and creative use of vocabulary stimulated the pupils' imaginative and artistic movements, and they used expansive and controlled movement of both arms and legs. Throughout the lesson pupils cooperated very well, discussed their performance with the teacher and suggested ways to improve their movements.

160 The oldest pupils attain good standards in games by the age of 11. All pupils change into PE kit, and good attention is paid to health and safety. Pupils listen very well during games and show good levels of control when practicing catching and fielding skills. They demonstrate good ball control skills, and work successfully in small groups to improve their performance. Pupils collaborate very well during group activities, and behaviour is very good.

161 The quality of teaching is good. The single lesson for the youngest pupils was judged to be excellent. Of the remaining lesson for pupils aged seven to eleven years, three were good and one was very good. In the excellent dance lesson in Year 1/2, the pace of learning and concentration of the pupils could not be improved. This was due to the teacher providing excellent opportunities for pupils to learn from their mistakes and the purposeful learning environment she created. Good teaching has a positive effect on standards and on pupils' attitudes, learning and behaviour. Lessons are well planned and structured, and learning objectives are clearly identified and shared with the class. This helps to ensure that pupils know what they are to learn. Teachers' instructions are clear, and pupils listen very well and follow these enthusiastically. Pupils are also given opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work, which they do in a supportive and constructive way that also helps to develop speaking and listening skills. Teachers set high expectations in terms of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils and activities are well organised and managed.

162 There is good coordination of the subject. Good inclusion is a feature of all lesson plans, and all pupils have equality of opportunity to take part in the activities. A wide range of activities, including swimming, is offered to pupils. Teachers satisfactorily record and assess what pupils understand and can do. Resources are good and stored well. The school makes good use of the gymnasium, playground, swimming pool and school field to promote physical activities.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION [RE]

163 No lessons were observed during the time of the inspection because RE is taught alongside history and geography for parts of each term. It is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. The scrutiny of work and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils show that standards at age 11 are above the expectation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils of that age and in line with it for pupils at age seven. Evidence at the time of the last inspection placed standards higher at age seven, but this is most likely to be due to the variation in cohorts of pupils in small schools. Progress is satisfactory up to age seven and good throughout the rest of the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the level of support they receive in lessons.

164 Strengths in provision are:

- the contribution of the subject to the personal, social and emotional development and the spiritual development of the pupils,
- the quality of the scheme of work and the guidance it provides for teachers.

165 Area for development:

- to provide more opportunities for pupils to write.

166 Religious education is now taught for blocks of time each term. A recent example of this was the setting aside of three days to study and explore the feast of Divali. The pupils dressed in realistic costumes and took part in all the activities a Hindu family would enjoy during this period of celebration. In this way the pupils learned through first hand experience and, in discussion, could clearly recall the activities and showed a very good understanding of the Muslim faith. Whenever teachers are planning topics, there is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' understanding of themselves through posing searching questions and providing opportunities for reflection.

167 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen to stories from the Bible and learn about different annual festivals. When they move into Year 3, they focus on family and aspects of the world in which they live. In the upper part of the school, their experience of religion is broadened into an understanding of other faiths such as the Muslims and the Jews. In doing this, the school is broadening the pupils' experiences of religion and contrasting cultures, since there are very few people from other cultures in the area. The RE curriculum provides many very good opportunities for pupils to write about their own experiences. However, scrutiny reveals that there are missed opportunities for this to develop in some classes.

168 The subject is well managed, and the co-ordinator has gone to great lengths to ensure that teachers receive very good support in planning and delivering RE. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has a strong commitment to improve things further.