

INSPECTION REPORT

NACTON CE (CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Nacton, Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124738

Headteacher: Mrs E M Ditton

Lead inspector: Mr C D Loizou

Dates of inspection: 18 – 19 April 2005

Inspection number: 267369

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
Number on roll: 84

School address: The Street
Nacton Village
Ipswich
Suffolk

Postcode: IP10 0EU

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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr K Silburn

Date of previous inspection: 5 July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Nacton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is situated in the small rural village of Nacton near Ipswich in Suffolk. There are 84 boys and girls on roll, which is below average in size. The school admits up to 13 four-year-old children into its Reception year each September. The children's attainment on entry to the school is average overall, especially in language and communication skills and mathematics but this varies considerably from year to year and in some years is below average. There are three mixed-age classes and one class with Year 2 pupils. The Reception children are taught in the same class as Year 1 pupils. The other two classes comprise a mixed Year 3 and 4 class and a mixed Year 5 and 6 class. Most of the pupils live near to the school but a significant number travel considerable distances because the area the school serves is wider than the immediate village area. Nearly all the pupils are of white-British heritage. Four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (15 per cent) is below average and two pupils have a statement of special educational need. However, in two of the year groups there is a relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18645	Mr Charalambos Loizou	Lead inspector	English Mathematics Geography History Information and communication technology Music Physical education
32655	Mr John Bostock	Lay inspector	
19774	Mrs Maura Docherty	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with a very good ethos. Pupils are happy and develop confidence, maturity and independence. Standards are above average by Year 6 in nearly all areas of the curriculum. The school is well led by the headteacher who is given good support by the governing body. Parents think highly of the school. Teaching and learning are good and the school offers good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining above average standards in nearly all subjects but some more able pupils are not reaching the standards expected of them;
- the teaching is good across the school but there are not enough opportunities for the pupils to think for themselves or work independently in some lessons;
- the headteacher and senior teacher provide good leadership and they are well supported by governors;
- teachers plan lessons well and make good use of accurate assessments to set targets but the teachers' marking does not always help the pupils to understand the next stages of their learning;
- the curriculum is enhanced by excellent partnerships with the community, businesses and the federation of small schools;
- attitudes and behaviour are very good; relationships are excellent; pupils' views are valued and there is a clear and effective focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected. Standards are rising well in Years 3 to 6 but the dip last year in Year 2 shows some inconsistencies, especially in the targeting of more able pupils. The teaching, curriculum, leadership, and management of information and communication technology have improved. Good progress has been made in addressing the issues. Information for parents is now good and complies with all statutory requirements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	A	C	D
Mathematics	C	C	D	E*
Science	C	A	A	C

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

Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of attaining the higher levels, **achieve well**. Current standards in Year 2 are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In Year 6, current standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. In both year groups, the pupils have made good progress since entry. The children enter the Reception year with average or lower attainment. This varies from year to year and sometimes few pupils have potential for high attainment. They achieve well and most will reach and exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year in all areas of learning. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The results were in the lowest five per cent of

schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. However, that particular year group had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the overall attainment on entry to the Reception year was low. The 2004 results for pupils in Year 6 improved on previous years and results have been improving at a faster rate than that seen nationally. However, the mathematics results in Year 6 in 2004 were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally because several more able pupils just fell short of the higher levels in the tests. This is a weakness in the school's teaching, which is not always demanding enough to ensure that all more able pupils exceed the levels expected for their age. Inspectors found that standards in the current Year 6 are continuing to rise. Standards have risen well in information and communication technology and are now above those expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are well above average in art and design and above average in other subjects except in religious education, where they are average.

The pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good**. They have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good education. The teaching is good and contributes to the good start made by the children in the Reception year and the pupils' good learning and achievement in Years 1 to 6. The teachers, well supported by teaching assistants, are successful in planning practical and challenging work. However, target setting and teachers' marking are not sharp enough and do not help to inform the pupils of the next stages of their learning. Good use is made of resources, particularly those for information and communication technology.

The school provides a good curriculum, enhanced by a very good range of enrichment activities. The care and welfare of the pupils are very good and they are offered good support and guidance. The school benefits from good links with parents. There are excellent links with the community, businesses and organisations; and very good relationships with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher's good leadership is having a direct impact on the pupils' achievement and standards because there is a strong focus on developing and improving the quality of education. As a result, the school has a very good climate for learning in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to make progress. The governors and senior teacher play a significant part in the school's development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents think well of the school and recognise the good quality of the opportunities it offers. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and value their friendships. They like their teachers very much and feel very well cared for. Communication is good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- provide effective learning targets that are specific to the needs of more able pupils;
- improve the teaching further by providing more opportunities for the pupils to think for themselves and work independently;
- provide more information in teachers' marking to help the pupils understand the next stages of their learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The evidence of the inspection confirms that the pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards in English are average by the end of Years 2 and above average by Year 6. In mathematics and science they are above average across the school. After a brief decline in Year 2, standards have recovered and are rising; they continue to rise well in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils of all ages achieve well because they are well taught but target setting for more able pupils is not sharp enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported well and their progress is monitored effectively.

Commentary

1. The children enter the Reception year with skills that are average but this changes from year to year because the sizes of the cohorts vary considerably and in some year groups there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The children settle well, enjoy their time in the Reception year and they are well taught. They make good strides, achieve well and will achieve and exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year in communication, language and literacy; mathematical development and all other areas of learning.
2. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The results were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. When compared with schools in similar circumstances, the results were also very low in reading, writing and mathematics. This cohort of pupils started school with low levels of attainment and over one third had special educational needs. No pupil attained the higher Level 3 in reading, writing or in mathematics and this accounts for the low overall test scores compared with other schools nationally. The results over recent years have declined at a faster rate than the national picture but last year's fall was largely responsible for this overall trend of decline. The current Year 2 pupils will reverse the trend dramatically, reflecting a much-improved picture as a result of good and effective teaching.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	12.5 (14.7)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	10.2 (13.3)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	13.0 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Inspectors found that in Years 1 and 2, the pupils' achievement is good. They are well taught and they make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Current standards in Year 2 are average in English and they are above average in mathematics and science.

4. In Year 6, in 2004, the national test results were average in English, below average in mathematics and well above average in science. When compared with similar schools, the results were below average in English and they were in the lowest five per cent of schools in mathematics. Science results were slightly better as they were average when compared with similar schools. However, it should be noted that the proportion of pupils with special educational needs was higher than in most other year groups so the results were close to the targets set by the school. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was above average in English and science and below average in mathematics. The results over the last four years have been improving faster than the national trend because the teaching is effective. However, target setting for more able pupils is less secure and precise resulting in the variations seen each year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (28.8)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.0 (26.5)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.0 (30.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are rising in Years 3 to 6 and the pupils are achieving well in the main. In Year 6, standards are currently above average in English, mathematics and science. The school places a high priority on the pupils' literacy and numeracy and a very close check is kept on how they are progressing. Well-structured lessons and a strong emphasis on providing practical, first-hand experiences, are helping the pupils to make good progress in acquiring the basic skills. A wide range of strategies is used to develop the pupils' literacy skills as they get older and reading and writing are taught effectively. However, the variations in national test results each year are partly due to the lack of precise learning targets for more able pupils and procedures to ensure that they achieve the expected higher levels in the national tests. Grammar and spelling are taught well and this is reflected in the accuracy of the pupils' spelling tests. This is also evident in their day-to-day writing because the school has developed systematic approaches to the teaching of writing to improve the pupils' fluency and standard of presentation. The mathematics programme is well organised and taught and this enables the pupils to reach the expected levels. Standards in science are above those expected because the pupils are given a variety of stimulating and challenging investigations and experiments, so that they develop the skills of scientific enquiry well.
6. Among other subjects, standards have risen well in information and communication technology and they are now above those expected of pupils in Years 2 and 6, due largely to improvements to resources, teaching and organisation. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In art and design, standards are well above average because the pupils enjoy a broad curriculum that develops their skills progressively as they get older. In geography, history and music, standards are above those expected because the school is successful in providing interesting cross-curricular links and topics for the pupils to study and investigate. However, more could be done to enable the pupils to think for

themselves with fewer prescribed activities and worksheets to improve their thinking and independent enquiry skills.

7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress in lessons because planning takes account of their needs and support is provided by an effective team of teaching assistants. The very small numbers of pupils from ethnic minority families also achieve well and make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall. Attendance is well above the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with each other and behave very well which is having a positive effect on teaching and learning.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work resulting in them learning well.
- The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development.
- Pupils' knowledge about life in multi-cultural Britain is patchy because the school does not include this aspect enough in the work that pupils do.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently very good and has improved further this year which enables pupils to benefit from the opportunities the school provides.

Commentary

8. Pupils work and play together very well. They naturally help each other with small problems, older pupils look out for the care of younger ones and pupils are caring and compassionate about each others welfare. All pupils mix well together, playing imaginatively with the many resources provided. In their work, pupils help each other and co-operate well together with tasks. Their good behaviour in lessons enables teachers to concentrate on teaching, rather than class control. There is no evidence of bullying or racist behaviour.
9. Pupils enjoy school. They are enthusiastic, keen to get on with their work and apply themselves well. They want to be involved, contribute to the learning in lessons and other activities, co-operate in joint activities and work hard individually. These positive attitudes enable them to make good progress in lessons.
10. The development of pupils' knowledge about social, moral, cultural and spiritual matters is a strong feature of the school's work. Pupils learn about their immediate school community, the local area and their wider cultural heritage through a well-structured programme of visits and visitors to the school. These support curriculum work and personal development very well, for example, the current history project involves members of the local community visiting the school to talk about Nacton today compared to what it was in the past. The school recognises that the development of pupils' awareness about life in a multi-cultural society needs to be addressed more fully, especially in relation to the features of multi-cultural Britain today. There are many stimuli about moral issues and pupils are frequently reminded about rules of behaviour, and treating people with care and courtesy. In one lesson aimed at developing the pupils' personal and social skills, older pupils discussed concepts of real and perceived fairness of rules and democracy. All pupils have a clear understanding about right and wrong. Although close links with the village church enrich pupils' spiritual knowledge well visits to places of worship of other faiths are not made. The school council operates in a mature way and provides a useful outlet for pupils' ideas and opinions and they enjoy having their views recognised. Several charities benefit from the pupils' efforts and opportunities to show

responsibility are also taken up enthusiastically such as by being playground friends, contributing to the school's computer web site or when acting as monitors.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Attendance levels have been consistently well above the national average for several years and the pupils are punctual and keen to come to school. Although there were four incidents of temporary exclusion last year involving only two pupils, this was untypical for the school and this year there have been no exclusions.

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	66	4	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching, learning and curriculum are good and there are very good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents are good and those with the community are excellent; there are very good links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers make lessons interesting, challenging and practical.
- The use of information and communication technology, particularly the interactive whiteboards, is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
- The teachers use assessment information well to match work to the needs of different abilities but the pupils' targets are not always specific to the needs of more able pupils.

Commentary

12. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this has a significant impact on the pupils' achievement and the progress they make. The teaching was very good in over three

out of ten lessons seen and across the school there are many noteworthy features. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	7	5	0	0	0

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

13. The children in the Foundation Stage (Reception year) achieve well because of the good quality of teaching. The teachers and teaching assistants work as an effective team due, in no small part, to good leadership and management. All members of the staff know the children well, despite recent staffing changes. Communication with parents is good. The well organised and effective planning ensures that every child works at a level that matches his or her age and ability. The children enter the Reception year with varying degrees of speech and language skills. Programmes are provided that will help each child improve in all areas of learning, particularly in early language and literacy. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection in the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage.
14. The school gives the highest priority to the development of the pupils' self-esteem and their progress in literacy and numeracy. Consequently, these areas are well taught and the pupils achieve well. The teachers have a clear understanding of how the basic skills should be taught and there is a consistent approach from class to class. Lessons in literacy and numeracy follow the national guidelines, but are adapted to take account of the pupils' understanding and experience. The teaching of information and communication technology has improved well due largely to the leadership of the co-ordinator, who has been instrumental in improving the knowledge and confidence of the teachers and ensuring consistency from class to class.
15. The pupils respond very positively to the teachers' high expectations of how they should behave and approach their work. Lessons are invariably calm; the pupils are able to concentrate on their learning, secure in the knowledge that their contributions will be valued by adults and other pupils. They are not afraid to make mistakes but, equally, they enjoy succeeding. This was seen to great effect in a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, where the pupils took great delight investigating the key features and function of the heart. On the rare occasions when pupils misbehave, this is dealt with very effectively by the staff. The teachers plan interesting and exciting activities that capture the pupils' attention and motivate them to do well. The introduction of interactive whiteboards in each classroom is proving very effective and there were many examples of good use during the inspection. Their use in English and mathematics – often during the introductory activities, or to recap what they learned in a previous lesson – helps lessons to get off to a brisk start. Years 3 and 4 enjoy, for example, using the whiteboards to change the calibration of numbers on a number line to help them identify the next nearest number in tens or hundreds.
16. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good across the school. In the Reception year, the early identification and assessment of the children's needs means that those with special educational needs are supported well, enabling them to make good progress. All members of staff are aware of the needs of the pupils through well-written individual education plans. Targets inform planning and the deployment of teaching assistants. The school is also aware of the number of gifted

and able pupils in the school although planning does not always indicate opportunities for the most able to work more independently beyond the limits of the set lesson.

17. Across the school, there are good procedures to assess the pupils and keep a check on their progress, particularly in English and mathematics, but increasingly in other subjects as well. The information gathered is used effectively to identify areas of strength or weakness in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding; to ensure that the work planned meets the needs of pupils of differing ability; and to set targets for improvement. However, the targets set for some more able pupils are not specific enough to help them reach the higher levels in national tests. Furthermore, teachers' marking, whilst regular and helpful for tracking the progress of the pupils, does not always help them to understand the next stages of their learning.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum which is planned in a two-year cycle to take account of mixed-age classes. It enriches learning through a very good range of extra-curricular activities, with a particular emphasis on the creative and expressive arts. The curriculum for Foundation Stage children in the Reception year is satisfactory. Resources are good and accommodation is satisfactory, with aspects which need improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has good breadth and balance and is planned to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes.
- The school provides very good opportunities for enrichment, including extra-curricular activities and through its extensive partnership and linked programmes with other schools and organisations.
- Provision for pupils with special educational need is good.
- Teaching and learning are enhanced well by the use of information and communication technology resources.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory in some important areas.

Commentary

18. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is well planned and it meets statutory requirements fully. It provides interesting and worthwhile learning opportunities for all pupils and it is enhanced by very good extra-curricular experiences, particularly in the arts. For example, pupils have a good opportunity to learn a musical instrument, a brass instrument in Years 5 and 6, and the recorder for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum has been reviewed in the light of the national Primary Strategy "Excellence and Enjoyment", and good links are made between different subjects to enhance teaching and learning, understanding, and interest. For example, in Year 6, pupils studied the structure and function of the heart in science, used the Internet to find answers to their questions, and practised their note-taking skills as preparation for writing an explanatory text about the heart in their next literacy lesson. Art and design, and history, were brought together when pupils painted Greek amphorae with close attention to the design and shape of the vessel.
19. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of additional opportunities, including an exciting programme of visiting artists and musicians, who raise the general cultural awareness of pupils and they are greatly appreciated by them. The curriculum does not give sufficient opportunity for pupils to appreciate the broad range of cultures

represented in multi-cultural Britain. The school makes good use of business partnerships to enrich experiences. Pupils talked excitedly about the touring circus that has visited the area for two successive years, through which they learned a number of circus skills. The Foundation Stage curriculum is generally well planned and resourced, but provision for the Reception year children to experience an outdoor curriculum is limited because of problems of accommodation.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through careful assessments, well written individual education plans and the effective deployment of teaching assistants, some of whom are well trained in strategies to boost pupils' performance or to support specific learning needs. Gifted and able pupils are given the opportunity for challenge and stimulus through special 'enrichment days', working with other pupils from the nine feeder primary schools of the Kesgrave High School Pyramid. However, there is less evidence of more able pupils working independently to achieve the level of attainment of which they are capable.
21. Members of staff use information and communication technology resources imaginatively. For example, interactive whiteboards are used to present information in stimulating and interesting ways and to give pupils opportunities to use computers to support learning. In this way teachers are helping pupils to see some of the capabilities of new technology for learning and to develop more academic skills as they move through the school.
22. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there is insufficient space for indoor physical education and for regular outdoor activities for the Reception year children.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. It provides pupils with good support, advice and guidance and takes good account of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' trust in the staff helps them to feel secure and valued.
- There are rigorous and systematic procedures to ensure the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety.
- The school makes good use of pupils' opinions and ideas in its planning.
- The induction¹ of pupils and their progress through school are managed well.

Commentary

23. The members of staff are very caring and alert to the needs of the pupils', especially their physical and emotional well-being. Consequently, the pupils have formed trusting relationships with adults in the school and they say that they can speak to any adult when they have problems. Parents feel satisfied that the school takes good care of their children, as do the pupils who feel able to work and play effectively in a safe and secure environment.
24. The school has robust arrangements such as for child protection, which ensure that the care and welfare of pupils are well managed. Seating and shade are provided in the play areas. Supervision of breaks is well organised and many games are available. Pupils recognise that healthy food is provided. Professional services are used for medical support where appropriate. All accidents and incidents are handled sensitively and appropriately.
25. There are good systematic arrangements for ensuring the safety of pupils and staff. Maintenance of equipment and the building is carried out in an orderly and timely way and there are good processes to ensure problems are identified and dealt with. Experienced members of staff lead the various trips and they conduct appropriate risk assessment procedures beforehand.
26. Pupils' opinions are obtained through the school council, which is well established and meets regularly. Members are elected, represent all classes, have developed a constitution and discuss topics relevant to pupils such as healthy food and a charity collection, for example, for the recent tsunami disaster. Suggestions and decisions are discussed with classes in circle time. The school council is supported by a teaching assistant who is also a governor. The school council invites other members of staff to attend, including the school cook and asked to be invited to attend a meeting of the Governing Body to meet the governors. Many discussions between staff and pupils inform the school of pupils' opinions.
27. The induction of new pupils is handled sensitively. Many pupils come from outside the immediate area. Parents and children visit the school and there is a meeting for parents well before the start of the school year. Starting arrangements for the youngest pupils are for them to attend in the mornings only to ensure pupils are not overwhelmed. Teachers discuss pupils individually as they progress through the school and pass on to the next teacher comprehensive details of their work and personal development. Pupils discuss and write about their expectations of life in their new class to help them settle as they move into new classes. Teachers visit pupils in their classes and pupils visit their next classes to see their new environment.

¹ Induction refers to the arrangements to receive pupils who are new to the school, helping them to settle into school routines and to make friends.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership arrangements with parents are good. Links with the community are excellent and links with other schools, colleges and enterprises are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent links with the community support pupils learning.
- Extensive arrangements with various enterprises provide funding, resources and opportunities for personal development and curriculum enrichment.
- The school and pupils benefit from the involvement with other local schools.
- Parental support for the school is strong which benefits pupils' learning.

Commentary

28. The school is exceptionally well integrated into the community and it uses these links very well to add to pupils' learning in subjects and to support their personal development. A structured range of visits focus on subjects such as geography, the environment, history and nature as well as sport, adventure and team building activities for older pupils. Young pupils walk to the local post office and shop as well as frequently going to the church. Visitors to the school bring poetry and music often with an international flavour, such as African drummers, artists and story tellers. The school's well-established brass band play at local events, older local citizens are invited to carols and shows and the Christmas and summer fairs as well as the autumn celebration are open to families and friends.
29. Business and other enterprises are used widely to enrich the development of pupils. Initially, many links were established through schemes such as Education Business Partnership and these contacts have been further developed into on-going relationships. National corporations and industries have provided partners for mathematics and work in information and communication technology. Funding has been obtained to develop internet links with a local special school and another school in Italy. There is a project with a major national utilities company to help the pupils gain an insight into monitoring weather patterns. Work with local newspaper groups support reading schemes and the school has been on local and national television for its healthy food provision. The school has been involved for several years with a touring circus company who set up their show on a field opposite the school and pupils visit to learn about circus life.
30. The school has strong relationships with local schools. It is a member of a pyramid with the main local secondary school and other feeder schools. Pupils benefit from enrichment days in various subjects and some older pupils work on drama, music and design and technology projects to develop their abilities further. The federation of local small schools is a well-established and successful partnership that enables pupils to meet regularly with peers from the other schools for federation days, for example, to work on drama workshops or share in organised sailing instruction when participating in outdoor adventurous activities. They also go together on residential visits which develops their social and personal skills as well as having curriculum content such as geography, history and information and communication technology. Teachers meet to discuss work and professional development is shared. There is also a very good relationship with a local special school. Pupils visit other schools, e-mails are exchanged, and projects are created together.
31. Parents comment very favourably about the school, praising all aspects of its work with their children and they generally feel well informed by communications about the daily life of the school and changes to arrangements. Nearly all parents commented during the inspection about their satisfaction with the ethos of the school, the support to help them help their children learn better as well as their personal and academic

development. Parents help in school and some lessons as well as supporting trips and events. In addition, the school association is very successful in fund raising for school equipment such as instruments for the brass band and playground equipment.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are good overall. The headteacher and senior teacher provide good leadership.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership is having a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning and on the standards achieved by the pupils.
- The school's very good climate for learning is stimulated by the leadership's clarity of focus on raising achievement by making the teaching even better.
- The analysis and review of targets by staff and governors are not always sharp enough to ensure that more able pupils reach their targets.
- The governors provide good support and are at the heart of the school's drive for improvement.

Commentary

32. The headteacher's energy and determination to improve the good education that the school provides inspires staff, governors and parents. As a result, the teachers and all other staff work well as a team and they are keen to improve further the good quality of what the school provides for its pupils. There is a strong focus on the very good care that members of staff give to pupils and a continuing emphasis on enabling them to improve their achievements still further through the enrichment provided in close working partnerships with other schools, businesses and organisations.
33. The careful analysis of assessment information, and the monitoring of teaching and learning, enables the headteacher to make an accurate appraisal of what the school is doing well and identify what it needs to do to continue to improve. The governors and parents rightly value what the headteacher and staff provide for the pupils. Although the analysis of assessment information has been thorough and informative for staff and governors, targets have not always been achieved by more able pupils and this is an area for the school must to improve further.
34. The measures for making teaching even better are contributing well to the rising standards and this has been particularly successful in Year 2 where standards are now improving after a brief period of decline. The school is good at involving support staff and teaching assistants, as well as teachers, in its effective efforts to improve teaching. For example, all members of staff attend training days, including those at other schools, often as part of the federation of small schools resulting in a good impact on what the school provides. Consequently, teaching assistants are very much a part of the whole team. Staff development is given a high priority. Those new to the profession are enabled to work alongside other, more experienced colleagues to develop their skills.
35. The governors are central to the school's efforts to improve and they play the role of 'critical friend' effectively. Their role has been maintained well since the last inspection and they are involved in monitoring what the school is doing to improve. They have well organised arrangements for reviewing what has been done so far to meet their priorities and for revising their plans accordingly. Subject co-ordinators provide clear information for the governors' committees who in turn evaluate action plans and inform the full governing body. The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses reported in its last inspection. The governors and headteacher have

improved resources, particularly fiction and non-fiction books, and reports to parents now inform parents fully on their children's progress. The school improvement plan clearly shows what the school wants to improve, the steps it proposes to take, and who, including governors, will be responsible for ensuring that targets are met. There is a well-expressed vision for the school over the next few years. The plan is sharply focused and is a good tool for helping the school to move even further forward.

36. The senior teacher and staff, together with the headteacher who has a substantial teaching commitment, ensure that there is consistency of practice in the quality and range of teaching across the school. Teachers with responsibility for co-ordinating subjects make a good contribution to their development. They have a good impact on the planning of work and they get a good picture of the standards that the pupils achieve by looking at completed work. They consider carefully what needs to be done to improve the provision in their subjects and the resulting plan that they write informs the school's future development. The monitoring of teaching in subjects including English and mathematics has had a positive impact on its quality. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages this very important area of learning effectively. The coordinator is well supported by a designated governor, who meets regularly with the co-ordinator. Links with outside agencies are very good and enhance the provision.
37. The carry forward figure, although reduced compared with the previous year, is much higher than the nationally recommended five per cent. However, the school is carrying out refurbishment programmes and is improving information and communication technology resources which will reduce even further the school's carry forward balance. Financial planning is diligent, well organised and supported well by the secretarial and administrative staff. The school provides good value for money because the pupils achieve well overall and standards are rising as a result.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	282,610
Total expenditure	290,980
Expenditure per pupil	3,163

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	38,360
Balance carried forward to the next	29,990

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for the ten Reception children in the mixed-age Reception and Year 1 class is **good**. All achieve well and make good progress. Teaching is good overall. Tasks are well matched to the maturity and activities of the younger children. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. The school does not have a designated play area for the Foundation Stage and this reduces opportunities for children to initiate spontaneous adventurous play or to follow personal investigations throughout the day.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning is good and includes good opportunities for early literacy and mathematical skills to develop well.
- Members of staff work well as a team to support the particular needs of the Reception children in the mixed-age class.
- Provision for the personal, social, and emotional development of the children as well as their communication, language and literacy skills is very good.
- Accommodation for the outdoor curriculum is very limited.

Commentary

38. Each area of learning was sampled rather than inspected in depth, since there is only a small number of Reception aged children. Children achieve well in each area of learning and care is taken to ensure that they are given enough extra time and support to help them understand new ideas and concepts presented to the full class. This is achieved through good planning and the effective use of staff.
39. Achievement is good in **personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy**. Children arrive with broadly typical standards of attainment, but these rise quickly so that they transfer to Year 1 having achieved and often exceeded the expectations set out in the nationally agreed early learning goals. Teaching is good overall and there is a good balance between directed, guided, and self-chosen activities. Children are taught by two part-time teachers and their assistant, who plan well and are developing as an effective team. The members of staff place a high priority on assessment to ensure that children's progress is carefully recorded and work can be planned at an appropriate level. The curriculum is well balanced and all areas of learning are taught well. Activities are interesting and motivating and are planned around a termly theme, currently 'on the farm'. Good links are made across different areas of learning to help children understand the topic, for example, this term through planting seeds, demonstrating the life-cycle of plants and animals in dance, and reading stories such as "The Little Red Hen" about growing a crop to produce flour to make a cake.
40. Provision for **personal, social, and emotional development** is very good and good opportunities are provided to help children develop their independence and to work well together. For example, in the home play area children created their own domestic drama, allocating roles to each other and directing actions, including calling for an ambulance and administering sympathy and first aid appropriately. Children discussed the behaviour of the Little Red Hen, demonstrating a strong sense of fair play,

agreeing with the hen's judgement that the lazy friends should not enjoy the cake as they had not helped to produce it.

41. Provision for **communication, language and literacy** is very good. Throughout the day speaking and listening skills are supported with a wide range of well-chosen activities. Children are encouraged to talk together in small group tasks. They are given time to talk together before answering questions posed by the teacher in whole-class sessions. After a whole-class introduction to the story, "The Little Red Hen", Reception children were given more time to explore the key ideas so that staff could check their understanding before a written task was set. Early literacy skills are taught well. Children are increasing their knowledge and understanding because of the good opportunities they have throughout the day to handle books, to learn that print carries meaning, and to use writing as a means of recording ideas. Most are well on course to exceed the national goals in this area of learning by the end of the school year. Children are aware of how stories are organised, recognise some of the sounds in words and bring expression to the repeated refrains, demonstrating their awareness that text has layers of meaning beyond simple vocabulary. Independent and guided writing activities allow children to record their stories at their own pace and attainment level. Children wrote their own Little Red Hen stories with confidence, retelling the story as they read their own work.
42. Provision for **mathematical development** is good. Adults use every opportunity to help children count, recognise numbers and to develop an understanding of shape, relative size, and simple measurement. They do this through a good range of activities. Children confidently counted to ten and beyond, demonstrated a one-to-one number correspondence when placing plastic eggs in eggcups, and counted out burgers and sausages when offering refreshments to visiting inspectors in the home corner. Knowledge is supported through a range of number games and rhymes which children enjoy.
43. Provision in **knowledge and understanding of the world** is good, and children are encouraged to be inquisitive about their world. Teachers plan a good range of activities and experiences to enhance children's knowledge. For example, in the week of the inspection they learnt how plants grow. Role-play activities in the home corner lead to an understanding of domestic responsibilities, including child care, safety, first aid, and hospitality. The three bears' house in the playground allows them to act out the events in this well loved story, confidently using literary language as they retell it. Children's natural curiosity is aroused as members of staff encourage them to talk about their discoveries and experiences, for example, when planting seeds and experimenting with a range of materials. When playing with wet sand, children came to understand its properties, recognising that it would not flow through a funnel as water and dry sand do. Through this kind of investigation they are not only comparing materials but also raising questions and learning how to describe the phenomena they are observing. The children were very excited when they discovered that by pressing a funnel into the sand they could force a snake of wet sand upwards through its end, and speculated enthusiastically about why this had happened.
44. Provision for **physical development** is satisfactory and children have a broad range of opportunities to use large and small apparatus to support co-ordination skills. Malleable materials, simple tools, and construction toys are readily available to help children develop control over small movements. Children show dexterity when handling pencils, scissors and paintbrushes to respond artistically in their learning. While Reception children have some opportunities in timetabled physical education

lessons for climbing, balancing, running and other large movements, they do not have a designated area which would allow them routinely to initiate more spontaneous and adventurous play or experience the broad curriculum in an outdoor setting.

45. Provision for **creative development** is good, with many opportunities to record ideas through painting, drawing and model making. Creative work is planned around the half-termly topic, and children explore many of the new ideas through a broad range of activities. Singing skills are developed through songs and rhymes, though dancing and drama opportunities are limited by the lack of availability of space. Pupils have good opportunity to accompany their singing with percussion instruments and do so with great enthusiasm. During one session in the assembly hall, the children sang action songs to demonstrate the growth of a plant but were so crowded together that their behaviour and achievement were adversely affected.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well because the overall quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The good management of the subject by the co-ordinator has ensured that standards in the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 have risen well and standards at the end of Year 2 have begun to rise after a period of decline.
- Target setting and teachers' marking are not sharp enough to ensure that standards continue to rise or to help the pupils understand the next stages of their learning.
- The school makes effective use of information and communication technology to support learning.

Commentary

46. The pupils join Year 1 with levels of attainment in language and communication that are above average. The good teaching enables the pupils to make good progress in developing their reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. The trusting relationships that have been developed between the teachers, the support staff and the pupils, build the pupils' confidence. The teachers provide many opportunities for the pupils to learn from first-hand experiences and to extend their vocabulary. For example, in a very effective Year 5 and 6 lesson, both the teacher and teaching assistant helped the pupils to improve their reading skills by discussing in groups the text being read and, by reading aloud to the group, the pupils improved their confidence and fluency. The pupils then went on to develop their writing skills further by learning how to recognise explanatory text. From the evidence of the pupils' writing in previous lessons, the pupils write clearly and accurately with confidence. At regular intervals in many lessons, the pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas on any given subject with another child, a 'response partner', and this strongly contributes to the pupils' development. The pupils listen very attentively to their teachers and this enables them all to contribute to class discussions.
47. Although standards in reading and writing were well below average by the end of Years 2 in last year's national tests, the pupils made satisfactory progress in relation

to their low attainment on entry. However, the school is not always targeting more able pupils accurately enough to ensure they reach the standards they are capable of and this weakness in the assessment procedures is one that the school recognises it needs to improve. Currently standards are average in Year 2 and above average by Year 6 and the pupils make good progress because of effective teaching based on a well-planned curriculum. The school makes good use of a range of strategies to help the pupils develop their reading skills. Each class has regular reading sessions when the pupils are encouraged to read and understand a wide variety of stimulating texts. Lower attaining pupils benefit from a very structured approach where the early skills are well taught. The teaching assistants play a vital role in supporting this work. Many parents reinforce the school's efforts by providing support and encouragement at home within the context of a carefully structured homework system, including the Homelink Mathematics Scheme with games to borrow for the younger pupils. The school encourages research and comprehension skills by providing opportunities for the pupils to find information on a range of themes on the Internet and then to express their findings in their own words.

48. Standards in writing are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6 and the pupils' achievements are good. Standards declined by Year 2 in the national tests last year but have recovered well this year to suggest that the school has improved the teaching well enough to have had an immediate impact. In Year 6, standards are improving faster than the national trend and recent appointments to the staff have strengthened the teaching further to ensure that standards continue to rise. The pupils are highly motivated to improve and the members of staff have high expectations and provide good feedback to the pupils. Grammar and spelling are well taught throughout the school and this is reflected in the accuracy that the pupils achieve in their spelling tests and in their day-to-day writing. Furthermore, the school acknowledges that there is scope for a more systematic approach to target setting to ensure that more able pupils reach levels that exceed those expected for their age.
49. The teachers plan work well to provide a range of opportunities for the pupils to write in different styles such as formal accounts, poems and letters. Good account is taken of the wide range of abilities in each class and the teaching assistants give effective support, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. For example, in a very good lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the classroom support staff fully engaged in the teaching by helping the pupils to express their ideas in writing. In a good Year 2 lesson, the pupils learned to arrange words in alphabetical order and very good use was made of computers and dictionaries to help the pupils.
50. Information and communication technology is well used to stimulate the pupils' ideas and creativity. This was particularly evident where the teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards to provide extensive background information through text and images to support the pupils' understanding. In every classroom, and in different subjects, there is a good range of attractive, well-presented written work. Lessons are well planned with a good balance of teacher input and pupil activities. In every lesson, appropriate learning objectives are set but teachers' marking does not always point out how best to achieve the next steps or stages of the pupils' learning.
51. The subject is well led and managed. A key reason for the pupils' success is the clear and careful planning that has brought consistency to the teaching across the school. Appropriate targets are set for the pupils' performance but the tracking is not sharp enough to ensure that more able pupils all reach the levels they are expected to attain. Effective monitoring systems and further professional development have improved the

quality of teaching. The school ensures that those pupils requiring additional support receive it and good use is made of outside agencies, such as theatre groups, to provide further motivation for the pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Subjects such as geography, history and science are used well to enhance the development of the pupils' literacy skills. They provide the pupils with opportunities: to write in their own words and in different styles; to practise their speaking and listening skills in group work and in role-play exercises; and to develop their reading and comprehension skills through research tasks. For example, in science lessons in Years 1 and 2, the pupils sequence the steps required to make a healthy sandwich and record their own observations on solids and liquids. However, there is some over-reliance on worksheets and this has the effect of limiting the scope for pupils to think for themselves or conduct their own research.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well because the teachers make lessons interesting, exciting and practical.
- The teaching assistants make sure that pupils with special educational needs are able to play a full part in lessons.
- A close check is kept on how the pupils are progressing but more able pupils do not always achieve their targets because target setting is not always specific to them.

Commentary

53. The pupils start Year 1 with mathematical knowledge and skills that are just above average. They make good progress, achieve well and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average. Last year's national tests show below average attainment by the end of Year 6 because some more able pupils just failed to reach the higher levels. This shortfall reflects some shortcomings in the way the school monitors the pupils' attainment targets particularly those of the more able. The low test results in Year 2 last year partly reflect the low level of attainment on entry to the school, for that particular cohort. In the national tests the results in 2004 were lower than in previous years due, largely, to a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school's results in 2004 also compared unfavourably with those schools working in similar circumstances. However, standards have improved this year and are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Over recent years the school's results have been improving at a faster rate than the national picture in Year 6 but the school recognises that it needs to improve its target setting procedures specifically for more able pupils to ensure that this rise in standards is sustained.
54. The subject is overseen effectively by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher, who keeps a close check on the progress made by the pupils and on the teaching and learning. Recognition of the need to improve target setting for more able pupils has alerted the school to some of the shortcomings revealed by the results of national tests. Day-to-day assessments, including the marking of pupils' work, are thorough, evaluate how the pupils are doing and identify what they need to do to improve.

However, it is not always clear to the pupils how they can improve and reach the next stages of their learning. Test results, including the national assessments, are analysed thoroughly to identify patterns of strength or weakness. Overall, the school makes good use of the information gleaned from these assessments to ensure that the work planned meets the needs of different levels of ability but the lack of sharp and specific targets for the more able has resulted in some of them just falling short of the standards expected of them in national tests. The whole staff tackles any areas for development very energetically.

55. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics. All members of staff aim to make lessons exciting, interesting and highly participative. They are successful in ensuring that all pupils are actively engaged from the very start. Lesson openings are brisk, often relate to work from previous lessons, and set the tone for the rest of the lesson. The interactive whiteboards are proving very effective in capturing the pupils' attention and enhancing the quality of the teacher's explanations and instructions. For example, in a very good lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils enjoyed working out how to round up or down using multiples of 100. The interactive whiteboard enabled the teacher to change the calibrations on a number line to help all the pupils to visualise the relative positions of different numbers.
56. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because lessons are well planned, so that those who need help get it. Pupils of all abilities develop in confidence as they move through the school, showing an increasing ability to calculate mentally, for example, knowing that their efforts, regardless of accuracy, will be received sensitively by the teachers. The pupils who are capable of trying harder work are challenged to do their best so that they, too, achieve well. The members of staff expect pupils of all abilities to do well and they, in turn, rise to the challenge. As a result, across the school the pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. They work very hard, persevere when they have difficulty and work well together in pairs and groups. Every opportunity is given to encourage the pupils to explain how they have arrived at an answer. The teaching assistants play a prominent role in ensuring that pupils of all abilities are able to contribute to the discussions and understand what they have to do. All staff are skilled at questioning to probe, prompt and guide the pupils and summing up sessions are used effectively during the course of lessons to summarise the learning so far and address any misunderstandings. This was evident in a very good Year 5 and 6 lesson to help the pupils improve their knowledge of area and perimeter in two-dimensional shapes.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use mathematics in other subjects. Daily registration sessions, particularly with the younger classes, are used to develop mental calculation. In science, the pupils measure the height of flowers and compare their own measurements with other pupils. In Year 2, the pupils measure the distances covered by model cars. Music lessons provide the opportunity for the pupils to count beats and develop mathematical language by comparing the length of notes. When investigating fruits and vegetable, in design and technology, pupils sort and collect data about their favourites. Older pupils create tallies, charts and matrices of their favourite food or conduct and record surveys. Patterns are investigated in art and design, for example by exploring repeating patterns in buildings. There are numerous opportunities to develop mathematics in information and communication technology, including creating two-dimensional shapes using an art package and consolidating the

pupils' knowledge of their names and properties. Their understanding of angles and directional language is developed when giving instructions to control a programmable robot on the computer screen.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good attitude to their learning and engage very well with their tasks.
- Standards in Year 2 are improving well.
- The skills of scientific enquiry are taught well.

Commentary

58. The percentage of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected standards in national tests in 2004 was in line with the national average, with a very high percentage attaining levels beyond this. When compared with similar schools, however, the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels was below average, with only an average percentage achieving beyond this level. Teachers' assessments in 2004 indicated that Year 2 standards were well below the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. No Year 2 pupil attained standards beyond the expected level in 2004. The school has taken targeted action to improve standards and its work is having a significant impact, particularly in Year 2. Standards of work are currently above average in Year 2 and in Year 6. The difference between the standards in the current Year 2 and those attained in 2004 is due in part to the variations in the number of pupils with the potential for higher attainment but also to the improved effectiveness of the teaching and assessment. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the pupils in that year group have special educational needs and the attainment on entry to the school for the whole cohort was well below average for their age.
59. Pupils achieve well overall. From work in books and curriculum plans it is evident that teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' skills of investigation, with good opportunity for testing hypotheses through a range of scientific enquiries. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate good observational skills, for example, considering the structure of an animal heart and transferring what they see into diagrammatic form to help them understand the cardio-respiratory system of the human body. In Year 2, pupils are developing well the scientific skill of classification through a range of activities. They know that plants and animals can be classified by identifying particular attributes and they use such attributes to sort a number of specimens. Pupils were able to justify their decisions by using appropriate language, for example, "this is an animal (plant) because it has ..." and "this is an animal (plant) because it does not have...", displaying a great deal of confidence, even when presented with a slug which, while not having legs, is still an animal.
60. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and engage very well with their tasks. Pupils work well together and help each other in groups when required. For example, when they used the Internet to find out more information about the heart, the more experienced Year 6 pupils helped others to search for information by suggesting more

precise questions. Year 4 pupils talked about their science work, recalling with enthusiasm an investigation in which they grew plants in different locations to see the impact of light and heat on growth. They understood that they could isolate particular variables and through controlled tests compare the results and draw conclusions. They used appropriate terminology and remembered the details of their investigations, demonstrating good knowledge and understanding.

61. Teaching and learning are generally good. Teachers plan well and provide a good level of challenge for most pupils. Those learning with special educational needs are given extra support by well deployed teaching assistants and are therefore fully involved in the activities. The practical and visual elements of science lessons support their learning and provide a fully inclusive experience. Teachers demonstrate very good questioning skills, which help pupils develop an understanding of the topic as the lesson unfolds. Work in books, however, suggests that the more able pupils are not expected to work independently or go beyond the limits of the set lesson. This suggests that these pupils are not being challenged to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Teachers extend pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology through science. For example, Year 2 pupils collected information about food preference through a tally chart and transferred the data to a block graph using a computer programme. Year 6 pupils compared the mass of an object in air and in water and drew up a table of results from which to draw conclusions.
62. The co-ordinator is recently appointed. He understands what is needed to improve the subject, and action has already had a positive impact on standards achieved, particularly in Year 2. This work has included more rigorous monitoring and assessment and the support of less experienced members of staff. A recent audit of science resources indicates good provision for each of the units of work in the science curriculum. These were supplemented in Year 6 by a lamb's heart, which helped pupils see the inadequacy of a diagrammatic representation of the heart, and inspired high levels of discussion and understanding.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the pupils achieve well.
- The subject is led and managed well and this has contributed to the improvement in the teachers' confidence.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively in other subjects.

Commentary

63. The school has invested significantly in its information and communication technology facilities and resources since the last inspection. All classrooms now possess interactive whiteboards; the school has its own computer network that links the computers in the classrooms. Pupils of all ages and abilities benefit greatly from these resources and achieve well. They are now also effectively applying information and communication technology to their work in other subjects, especially through the use of the interactive whiteboards.

64. The teaching is good overall and this has a significant impact on the pupils' achievement. By the end of Year 2, they have a secure grasp of word processing, simple control technology and using paint packages to create imaginative pictures. The teachers in Years 3 to 6 build on these skills and by the end of Year 6 pupils are using spreadsheets, researching using the Internet and making multimedia presentations. In the Year 5 and 6 lesson observed, the pupils were creating a multimedia presentation and had to make decisions about which audio and video clips would be appropriate for their presentation. They communicate their ideas well and edit their work, enhancing it by importing graphics and text. They are all keen to learn and work hard, listening carefully and following instructions. Those pupils with special educational needs are successful because they receive the additional support they need. More able pupils often partner those with less confident information and communication technology skills and this is beneficial to both parties.
65. The subject leader has enhanced her colleagues' competence and brought consistency between year groups through monitoring. The teachers have good subject knowledge overall and their confidence has increased because of the support and training they have received. The school uses a good scheme of work, based on the national guidelines, and the teachers can access the school's planning and assessment guidance on-line. There is a helpful collection of assessed work that helps to ensure consistency across the school. Consequently, a careful check is kept on how the pupils are progressing.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Evidence from the previous school year and from those lessons observed indicates that the pupils are now beginning to use their information and communication technology skills effectively in other subjects. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils have created pictures and patterns using art software. Most pupils use their word processing skills well in English lessons; writing stories, poems, letters and using the computer's tools to draft and refine their work. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils make effective use of the Internet and multi-media programs to organise presentations. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 apply their technical skills to a wide range of cross-curricular projects. A particular success is the introduction of interactive whiteboards in each classroom. These are a regular feature in lessons in all subjects and their imaginative use is contributing strongly to the rising standards in school.

HUMANITIES

67. No lessons were observed in **geography and history** to make an overall judgement on the quality of the provision. The pupils' previous work in both these subjects is showing that the pupils make good progress and standards are above average. Good use is made of local studies; for example, when pupils are taken into the local area to carry out surveys and to observe different types of houses and the village shop. Very good use is made of the local area to study how life has changed over time. Currently, the school is involved in a history project called, 'Past and Present'. Local people are involved by visiting the school to share their experiences of World War II and to tell pupils how this affected their lives in the local village at the time. The pupils' recorded work shows good progress in understanding plans and maps. Years 3 and 4 pupils have been involved in role-play activities depicting Victorian schoolchildren and very good use is made of artefacts to help the pupils understand differences and similarities when comparing familiar current objects with their equivalents from the

past. Comparisons with Derbyshire in the cross-curricular project on 'The same but different, then and now' have been studied by older pupils in Years 5 and 6 following a residential visit to the Kingswood Centre in Norfolk (an outdoor activity and environmental studies centre). A key strength of the school's curriculum is the range of topics and projects that are planned for the pupils, and include shared projects with other schools as part of the pyramid and federation of small schools in the area.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected by the local agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory, including for those learning with special educational needs. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Suffolk agreed syllabus gives the school a good structure for planning.
- Pupils understand that family and community values are affected by religious beliefs.
- Visits are not made to places of worship beyond the local parish church and this limits the scope of work covered by the pupils in faiths other than Judaism and Christianity.

Commentary

68. Standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6. Work in pupils' books shows that teaching covers the appropriate areas of learning and pupils are coming to understand how learning about religion can help them understand rules of behaviour in their own lives. In Year 2 pupils made good links between the Judeo-Christian commandments and school rules. By Year 6 pupils have developed a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Judaism, but have little experience or knowledge of other religious faiths. This is because the school's interpretation of the requirements of the Suffolk agreed syllabus when following the 'Pyramid' agreed topic plan means that teaching about other world religions has not been of sufficient depth to help pupils' understanding. The school has good links with representatives from the local parish church, but the pupils do not visit places of worship of other faiths. Such opportunities would enhance their understanding of the multi-faith society of which they are members.
69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In Year 2, in a well structured lesson, pupils came to understand that holidays are derived from 'holy days', where early Christians followed God's instruction to rest on the Sabbath as He had after creating the world. The teacher encouraged them to understand that the Jewish Shabbat also provides a day of rest although on a different day of the week. This common experience of a holy day in Judaism and Christianity was developed in other classes, where pupils compared and contrasted places of worship, sacred books, and symbols, and particularly the set of rules people of faith use to guide family and community life. In Year 6 pupils also study Judaism, using the Internet to enhance learning with regard to celebration, symbol, and the holocaust.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. **Art and design** and **design and technology** were not a focus of the inspection and no lessons were observed. Work in books, photographic evidence, and displays around the school indicate that the curriculum is well planned and pupils produce work of a very high standard in both subjects. Skills are developed progressively from Years 1 to 6, for example, in close observational drawings and producing work in the style of particular artists. Pupils are also developing the skill of critically appraising such work with good judgement. Photographic evidence and some samples of pupils' **design and technology** work on display demonstrate good achievement in this subject. Pupils are developing the skill of designing and making products to meet particular specifications. Finished work is evaluated by the pupils.

71. Very little **music** teaching was observed during the course of the inspection so it is not possible to make overall judgements about provision. However, there is enough evidence to show from previous work and records of performances that the creative, musical and expressive arts are strong features of the school's curriculum and provision. Standards are above average. The school makes good use of a peripatetic music teacher who teaches Year 5 and 6 pupils to play brass instruments every week. Additionally, the pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to play the recorder. The school ensures that the pupils experience a very broad range of creative arts that include music, drama, dance and enrichment activities that involve theatre groups. This aspect of the school's curriculum is very strong, culminating in, for example, annual productions involving the school's brass band; drama productions, including 'A Midsummer Nights Dream' which involves all the pupils in the school and extra-curricular clubs and activities involving drama, sport, music and art and design. The pupils are introduced to a range of musical genre from around the world by inviting specialist musicians, for example African drummers. The school participates in special enrichment days with other schools in their federation that also involve the staff in professional development programmes for teachers and support staff to develop further the creative aspects of the school's curriculum.
72. Only one **physical education** lesson was observed and this was satisfactory. Although it was not possible to see lessons in the full range of activities offered by the school, the evidence from teachers' planning and the extensive range of extra-curricular provision as well as the one lesson observed indicate that standards are in line with those expected. In addition, the school reports that the large majority of the pupils are able to swim the expected 25 metres before they leave the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. One very good lesson was seen in the Year 5 and 6 class but no other direct teaching was seen in this area. The evidence from the lesson observed and from discussions with staff and pupils and the scrutiny of teachers' planning indicate that a very good programme is provided. Pupils in the lesson observed developed a very good awareness of 'fairness' and 'playing by the rules'. After looking at rules in board games and discussing how best to negotiate points of difference or resolving matters that dissatisfy one party or another, the pupils responded positively and intelligently to the questions posed by their teacher. The school has developed a very good policy and a comprehensive scheme of work to support the pupils' development and the school places a very strong emphasis on this aspect. Very good behaviour is reinforced during class discussion times where pupils are given the opportunity to explore ways of resolving issues and the school is particularly successful in supporting high quality relationships. Aspects of personal and social development are taught regularly in each class and strongly supported in assemblies. There are clear procedures for teaching sex education and drug awareness.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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