

INSPECTION REPORT

LODDON FIRST SCHOOL

Loddon, Norfolk

LEA area: Norfolk County Council

Unique reference number: 121203

Headteacher: Richard Ogilvie

Lead inspector: David Tytler

Dates of inspection: 5 - 7 July 2004

Inspection number: 270206

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 – 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	232
School address:	Kittens Lane Loddon Norwich Norfolk
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Graham Day
Date of previous inspection:	24/11/1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Loddon First School is in the small rural town of Loddon, about ten miles from Norwich, and caters for 232 pupils aged 3 to 8. Most of them come from the immediate area. The vast majority are from a white British background with a few from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds. The percentage of pupils taking a free meal is in line with the national average. There are 38 children in the Nursery, attending part-time either in the morning or afternoon, and 44 in Reception. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average: the proportion having a statement of special educational needs is above. These children have a range of learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has one pupil in public care. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school is part of the Loddon Cluster Group. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of ability, but overall attainment on entry into the school is broadly what is expected for children of their age. Pupil mobility is not an issue for this school. The school is to lose its Year 3 classes and become a discrete nursery and infant school. This is currently planned for September 2005, a change originally intended for September 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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32697	David Smith	Lay inspector	
20063	Gerry Slamon	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language
32415	Jane Allison	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Music
32620	Olsen Davis	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Loddon provides a good quality of education overall. Standards are well above the national average in writing and above in mathematics by the end of Year 2: standards in reading are average. Pupils generally achieve well as a result of the good teaching in Years 1 and 2 and the good leadership and management of the headteacher. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good management of the headteacher is leading the school carefully through a period of uncertainty and change.
- Consistently good teaching in the nursery and reception classes gives children a good start to their education and they achieve well.
- Pupils' very good social development underpins good personal development, although not enough is done for Year 3 pupils to develop independence.
- Art and music are strengths of the school and make an important contribution to pupils' cultural development.
- The role of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom is under developed.
- The inconsistent approach to reading limits the attainment of some pupils.
- The school is well governed: governors have a clear understanding of how to evaluate and monitor the school's performance.
- Skilled teaching assistants, particularly those supporting pupils with special educational needs, make an important contribution to pupils' learning.
- Parents value all aspects of the school's work and provide valuable support to their children's education at home and in school.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. A strong and affirmative ethos of inclusion has now been established where every child matters. All the key issues have been tackled, mostly successfully. Standards are rising and teaching has improved. However, more remains to be done in ensuring regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and in developing independence in Year 3 pupils. Arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do are now good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and the information is generally well used. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Long term planning in the nursery is now good and the school ensures that pupils build on their prior attainment as they move through the school. All statutory requirements are met.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	B	C	C
writing	A	A	B	B
mathematics	B	C	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Pupils' overall achievement is good.

Standards have generally been rising although there was a dip in 2002. Standards in the current Year 2 are now well above the national average in writing and above in mathematics, an improvement on the test results for seven-year-olds in 2003. In Year 3, standards are above the national expectations of pupils of their age in writing and mathematics: standards in reading are average. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3 are in line with expectations for children of their age. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Year 2 and match national expectations in Year 3. Standards in religious education match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3. Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment expected for children of their age. They achieve well as a result of the good teaching and most are likely to achieve the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. They are likely to exceed the goals for personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their social development is very good: their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and generally behave well as a result of their teachers' skills in providing lessons which are interesting and engaging. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good education for its pupils. As a result of the generally good teaching in Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well. The sound and better teaching in Year 3 enables pupils to achieve at least satisfactorily and sometimes well. The overall good teaching in the nursery and reception classes enables children to achieve well. The curriculum is good in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory in Years 1 to 3. The good level of care, guidance and support underpins pupils' personal development and enables them to take full advantage of the learning opportunities available to them. The very good partnership with parents supports children's learning at home and in school, as do the good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's good leadership and management is leading the school through a difficult period of change and is the driving force behind further school improvement. He is particularly well supported by his deputy. The governance of the school is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents support all aspects of the school's work. Some who responded to the questionnaire were concerned that their children were sometimes harassed in school. This was not raised at the pre-inspection meeting, nor was it reflected when inspectors spoke to pupils during the inspection. Pupils like school and say they are treated fairly. The vast majority say that they know who to go to if they have a concern and that their views are taken seriously. A few pupils were concerned about behaviour, but inspectors found that behaviour was generally good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in reading by ensuring a consistent approach to the teaching of reading throughout the school.

- Further develop the role of subject co-ordinators to include the monitoring of teaching and learning after appropriate training as part of the drive to raise standards throughout the school.
- Provide more opportunities for Year 3 pupils to develop their skills of independent learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are rising and by the end of Year 2 are now well above the national average in writing and above in mathematics: they match the national average in reading. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well and most will meet all the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1, with many exceeding them. In Year 3 pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards above the national expectations in writing and mathematics, and in line in reading.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes, together with the good teaching, enables children to make good gains in their learning.
- The good teaching enables pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 2.
- Whilst good use is made of pupils' literacy skills in some subjects, too little time is allowed for independent writing.
- Pupils make very good use of their ICT skills and good use of their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Investigative skills are underdeveloped in science and pupils in Year 3 do not have enough opportunities to develop independent learning skills.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (17.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.3 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.3 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Commentary

- 1 Standards have risen since the last inspection, particularly in writing, mathematics, art and music, by the end of Year 2 as a result of the good and better teaching coupled with the better use of assessment information to plan for the needs of individual pupils, notably the pupils of higher attainment, and as a result pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2.
- 2 This represents an improvement in mathematics since the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2003, largely as a result of the good use of assessment information, which has ensured that work provides a suitable level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Some pupils do not always achieve as well as they could in reading because of inconsistencies in the teaching. In comparison with similar schools, standards in the tests in 2003 were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing.
- 3 In Year 3, the sound and sometimes better teaching enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily and they attain standards above the national expectations for children of their age in writing, mathematics, art and music. Standards in reading are in line with national expectations.

- 4 Standards in science remain at the national average by the end of Year 2. A priority of the school is to ensure that teachers are better equipped to develop pupils' investigative skills and that better use is made of assessment information to enable pupils of all abilities to build on what they already know and can do.
- 5 As part of its drive to raise standards further, the school has made the improvement of assessment a priority and procedures are now good. Whilst good use is made of the information in some subjects, such as mathematics and ICT, it is not consistently well used in English and science.
- 6 Music and art are strengths of the school with standards above the national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 3, an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in art as a result of an improved curriculum and better teaching. Pupils throughout the school benefit from the high quality teaching provided by a music specialist.
- 7 Standards in ICT match national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 3. Standards in history are above the national expectations by the end of Year 2. Standards in design and technology and physical education (PE) are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 3. Timetabling arrangements meant that it was not possible to make an overall judgement on standards in geography or history by the end of Year 3. Standards in religious education match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3.
- 8 Children enter the Nursery with attainment in line with that expected nationally for children of their age. The good curriculum and the good and sometimes better teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes enables children to achieve well. Most will meet the learning goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1, with many exceeding them.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and given particularly good support by skilled learning assistants. As a result they make progress in line with their individual education plans and achieve as well as other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are well behaved in classes and around the school. Their personal development is good. Pupils' social development is very good: their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. Attendance is in line with the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond very well to the good examples set by adults, who show tolerance, respect and understanding.
- Assemblies make a good contribution to all aspects of pupils' personal development.
- Discussions in religious education lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' cultural development is well supported in many subjects, particularly in art and music.
- There are not enough opportunities for Year 3 pupils to become independent learners.
- A range of after school clubs and competitive sport with other schools promotes pupils' social and moral development well.
- Whilst most pupils arrive on time, a small number are regularly late.

Commentary

- 10 Teachers and pupils work together to create a positive climate for learning in which pupils try hard to do well and behave well in classes and assemblies and during play and lunch times,

and as they move around the school when, for example, going to the hall or music room. The good examples set by teachers and other adults underpin all aspects of pupils' personal development.

- 11 The school is a happy place with a real sense of community, where people are concerned for each other, treating them with respect and listening to their views. This aspect of school life was particularly evident at the school sports day, which was extremely well attended by parents, grandparents and friends. Whilst excited, pupils showed high levels of self-discipline, responding well to clear and consistently applied routines. The lack of overt behaviour control was striking. They knew what was expected of them. Equally impressive was the fact that pupils were concerned for the success of others and not unduly bothered if they did not win their own events. Working together harmoniously and effectively is a feature of school life, both in play and at work. Assemblies are also well used to help pupils understand the importance of caring for one another and the environment.
- 12 Pupils' cultural development, including their multi-cultural development, is well supported in assemblies, where pupils listen to music and sing enthusiastically but without shouting, and in art, music and religious education lessons. Pupils learn about the differences and similarities of other cultures and faiths and the need to understand and respect the beliefs of others.
- 13 Pupils' spiritual development is also well supported in assemblies, which encourage pupils to consider their own feelings and to think about the impact their actions have on others. Spiritual development is also well supported in religious education. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils gave careful consideration to how the characters felt and behaved in the parable of *The Good Samaritan*.
- 14 All aspects of personal development are well supported by the ethos of the school, which values all pupils in an inclusive, warm and welcoming environment and ensures that they can benefit from all the learning opportunities available to them. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for various tasks, including taking visitors on tours of the school, talking about it both knowledgeably and enthusiastically. However, there are too few opportunities in Year 3 lessons for pupils to learn how to be independent.
- 15 Children make good progress in the nursery and achieve well in personal, social and emotional development. Most exceed the expected learning goals in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

- 16 The school regularly reminds parents about the importance of consistent attendance and punctuality. Most parents ensure that their children attend school regularly. There are, however, still some parents who fail to ensure that their children arrive at school on time.

EXCLUSIONS

The good behaviour of pupils, their courtesy and friendliness is reflected by the lack of exclusions for at least 15 years.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education. Overall, teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good in the Nursery and Reception classes and satisfactory in Years 1 to 3. Pupils' experiences are broadened by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Their learning is also enhanced through the good support, advice and guidance provided by the school, the very good partnership with parents and good links with the community.

Teaching and learning

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	7 (17%)	21 (49%)	13 (30%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes enables pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils respond well to their teachers, who provide lessons which engage and hold their interest.
- Skilled learning assistants, particularly those working with pupils having special educational needs, make an important contribution to pupils' learning.
- There are not enough opportunities for Year 3 pupils to undertake independent research and take responsibility for their own learning.

Commentary

- 17 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is particularly strong in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 and as a result pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning in Year 3 is sound and pupils achieve satisfactorily. The achievement of these pupils, however, is limited because teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to use the Internet or the school library to carry out their own research or to write independently. In some Year 3 lessons, pupils spend too long seated on the carpet listening to the teacher and there is an over reliance on work-sheets rather than on pupils using their writing skills.
- 18 Good teaching, and sometimes better, was seen in all year groups and in all subjects observed, with some very good examples seen. In the one unsatisfactory – and atypical – lesson seen in mathematics, the work was too difficult for most pupils. Most pupils in this lesson were not clear about what was required of them and they lost concentration. As a result they did not achieve as well as they should.
- 19 Children are given a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes as a result of the good, and often better, teaching, which is clearly targeted to meet their needs. As a result, pupils achieve well in their lessons and will meet the expected learning goals and many will exceed them. One outstanding lesson was seen in Reception and this is reported on in the Foundation Stage section.
- 20 Teaching has improved since the last inspection and most teachers have a good knowledge of all subjects of the curriculum. The good management of pupils is a particular strength of the teaching in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are able to work independently and find things out for themselves. Teachers are skilful in planning a range of activities, which engage and hold

their pupils' interest ensuring their sustained concentration with neither a desire nor an opportunity to waste their time. As a result all pupils are involved in their learning and behave well. In a good Year 2 geography lesson comparing life in Kenya with their own, pupils were able to discuss the issues sensibly building on their knowledge gained from watching a video and hearing a visitor from Africa. The brisk pace of the lesson and the high expectations of the teacher built on the pupils' natural enthusiasm, channelling it into purposeful learning.

- 21 Many examples were seen of pupils working well in pairs, discussing their ideas in, for example, a good religious education lesson on *The Good Samaritan*. Good lessons were characterised by the teacher's insistence that pupils should justify their ideas and explain how they had arrived at their answers or conclusions. As a result, pupils grow in confidence, prepared to offer their ideas, defend them and raise questions if they are unsure. In a good Year 3 science lesson on how to plan a simple investigation, for example, pupils were encouraged to think scientifically and use the correct vocabulary. In general, however, there are too few opportunities for pupils throughout the school to carry out their own investigations in science, rather than rely heavily on the teachers' support.
- 22 By contrast, many examples were seen in mathematics of pupils carrying out their own investigations in, for instance, a good Year 1 lesson on deciding the best way to divide a chocolate bar equally between two and four pupils. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and writing skills in other lessons, although this is an area for development in some Year 3 lessons.
- 23 The good teamwork between teachers and support staff enhances the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively taught in line with the particular needs identified in their individual educational plans.
- 24 A key strand in the school's strategy to raise the quality of teaching and learning has been to improve the quality of assessment. In the Nursery and Reception classes, assessment procedures are good and are used well to plan the next steps in learning. Assessment arrangements are now good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Year 3. The information is being particularly well used in mathematics so that appropriate work is planned for pupils of all abilities and they are all achieving well.
- 25 Whilst the use of assessment information has identified the needs of higher attaining pupils, it is not always used consistently in English and science to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities or to identify clearly what pupils need to do to improve. The work provided for pupils having special educational needs is well matched to their prior attainment and enables them to achieve well in line with their individual education plans.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good in the Nursery and Reception classes and satisfactorily broad and balanced in Years 1 to 3. Pupils' experience is widened by a good range of visits, visitors and out of school activities. The school's accommodation and resources give satisfactory support to the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes enables children to achieve well.
- Skilled support staff, particularly those working with pupils having special educational needs, are a strength of the school.
- Teachers plan well together to ensure a consistent approach across and between year groups.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations in science.

- Whilst some good examples were seen, opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills are not always planned into lessons.
- Pupils are able to make good use of their numeracy and ICT skills in other lessons.

Commentary

- 26 The good curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes provides an interesting range of activities that enables pupils to achieve well and prepares them well for the next stage of learning. Outdoor provision in the Nursery is very good and well used to support pupils' social and physical development. Children in Reception, however, do not have access to an outside play area during most of the day. The good resources in these classes give good support to children's learning.
- 27 The satisfactory curriculum in Years 1 to 3 meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education and makes appropriate provision for sex and drugs education. Planning in English and mathematics ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs, build on their prior attainment, particularly in mathematics where work is matched to the needs of all pupils. Planning in science, however, does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations and in Year 3 there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop independence.
- 28 Whilst good examples were seen of pupils using their literacy skills well in some subjects such as history, design and technology and ICT, this was not always the case. In other lessons such as geography and religious education, pupils were given too little time for independent research or for writing. Pupils' numeracy skills are well used in other subjects. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills to support learning in other subjects well. The National Strategy for Numeracy has been adapted to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities but more remains to be done to refine the teaching of English.
- 29 The curriculum generally provides well for pupils with special educational needs, who benefit from the support given by the skilled learning assistants. The curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special needs, ensuring their inclusion in lessons and all aspects of school life. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
- 30 Pupils benefit from a good range of visits and visitors to the school and are enthusiastic attenders at a range of high quality out of school activities such as sport and a French club.
- 31 The accommodation provides an attractive place in which to work and learn although a lack of space in the hall and classrooms hampers work in practical subjects. The relatively new ICT suite is well used to support pupils' learning. The National Curriculum and religious education are well supported by generally good resources. The lack of a discrete outdoor area in the Reception classes impedes the children's physical development.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils are good overall. The provision of support, advice and guidance to pupils are good. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school looks after its pupils well; procedures for health and safety and child protection are comprehensive and effective.
- The school actively seeks pupils' views and accommodates their suggestions and preferences wherever possible.
- The school has effective monitoring and assessment procedures and these help pupils to make good progress in their work.

- Induction procedures are good and this helps new arrivals to settle in quickly and achieve well.

Commentary

- 32 Child protection procedures are good and staff are fully aware of their individual responsibilities. The thorough monitoring of health and safety, including regular risk assessments, is regularly overseen by governors and comprehensive records are kept. First aid procedures are good and parents are promptly informed if a mishap occurs during the school day. The school knows its pupils well, which helps teachers spot any emerging problems at an early stage. Pupils feel the school cares for them and they like and respect the adults in the school. They say that they feel able to ask for help or advice whenever they need it. Taken together, these arrangements enable pupils to concentrate on their work.
- 33 Pupils are confident that the school listens to their views and takes them seriously and inspectors agree. Pupils draw up their class rules at the start of the year and each year governors survey pupils' views in detail to gauge their opinions and aid planning. A school council is planned for September 2004.
- 34 Pupils told inspectors that they are well supported by their teachers. Pupils receive clear guidance on how well they are doing in their work and how they can improve. This helps them to make the most of their time in lessons and encourages them to work hard and do their best.
- 35 Arrangements for pupils entering the nursery are good. Nursery staff visit new children and their families at home. Equally good arrangements are in place for children to enter the Reception. Reception staff visit children in the school's own and other nurseries and opportunities for incoming children to visit the school with their parents are tailored to the needs of each child. This early contact enables members of staff and children to get to know each other at an early stage. As a result, teachers are able to plan activities that are closely matched to the needs of each child. This helps children get off to a good start when they join the Reception classes.
- 36 Pupils with special educational and physical needs receive very good support. Their learning, physical, social and emotional needs are clearly identified and their day-to-day care is well managed, with outside support agencies involved wherever necessary. Parents and carers are consulted at all stages to ensure that all aspects of the care are used to help these pupils gain maximum benefit from all they do at school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is very good. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very pleased with the school and the education it provides for their children.
- The school provides good information to parents and responds very well to their comments and suggestions.
- The school works closely with parents and encourages them to support their children in their learning.
- The community and local business contribute effectively to the work of the school.

Commentary

- 37 Parents are very closely involved with the life of the school and they make a very significant contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. A number of parents provide support in and around the school, helping children with reading and as classroom helpers. They also assist on school trips and visits. There is an active and very supportive friends association which supports the school in several ways and gives practical help in developing school facilities. The association makes very generous financial contributions to provide, for example, educational games and playground equipment. This high level of parental contribution is reflected in the high esteem in which parents hold the school. In discussions, parents are full of praise for the school, its staff and the education it provides for their children.
- 38 The school keeps parents well informed about the day-to-day life of the school. Regular newsletters provide good information about school events and developments. The school actively seeks parents' opinions. It has an open door policy and is willing to be flexible in trying different strategies to involve and inform parents. Whenever feasible, the school acts upon parents' suggestions and preferences and incorporates them into plans for the future.
- 39 Parents receive detailed information on the work planned for their children each term. Information evenings covering aspects of the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy, are well attended. Pupils' annual reports are clear and informative. A very effective home-school diary system keeps parents and teachers in close touch with each other. As a result, parents feel very well supported by the school.
- 40 Children's experiences are widened by the good links with the community which provide good support for the day-to-day life of the school. Visitors, such as the clergy, musicians, artists, authors, and members of emergency services, contribute to assemblies and classes. Former pupils return for work experience and staff from a local bank helped with the clearing of a patch of ground to prepare for the school's *Secret Garden*. In addition, pupils participate in a number of charitable events.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and ensures that the school is well managed. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's good leadership and management are leading the school through a difficult period of uncertainty and change.
- He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher in his drive to raise standards further.
- Whilst there has been some monitoring of teaching and learning, the role of subject co-ordinators is in need of development.
- Priorities for improvement have been clearly identified although some success criteria in the school improvement plan could be more precise and more clearly costed.
- Governors are playing an increasingly important role in monitoring the performance of the school, although they do not yet have a direct influence in planning for the school's future.

Commentary

- 41 The headteacher is leading the school well through a difficult time in its history as it prepares to change its role from first school to an infant school. The date for the change has been postponed once and there is still uncertainty over exactly when the school will lose its two Year 3 classes. He has also introduced a number of changes since his appointment two years ago, which are having an impact on standards and teaching and in further improving the partnership with parents. In all these innovations, he has been well supported by the deputy headteacher.
- 42 Working together, they have reviewed the school's approach to assessment, which is now much improved. There has been a particular focus on assessment for learning, which clearly identifies the desired outcomes of lessons and involves pupils in evaluating how well they think they have done against clear lesson objectives. He has also improved the curriculum in Year 3 by adding a creative dimension to lessons in literacy and numeracy. This is to be spread into the rest of the school.
- 43 Another innovation has been the introduction of home-school diaries, which are taken seriously by teachers, parents and pupils alike and are a key factor in the good communications between the school and parents.
- 44 The headteacher has monitored teaching and learning in all classrooms: the literacy, numeracy and ICT co-ordinators have monitored teaching and learning in their subjects. Weaknesses were identified and addressed. However, the role of all co-ordinators in rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching and learning is in need of development. They review work and planning and know what needs to be done to raise standards in their subjects.
- 45 A coherent programme for performance management has now been introduced and is firmly linked to the drive to improve standards further across the school. The professional development of teachers is linked to performance management, the school improvement plan and personal needs.
- 46 The head introduced a formal written school development plan shortly after his arrival. It is now a working document based on consultation with co-ordinators, who have responsibility for writing action plans for their subjects. Whilst priorities are clear and appropriate, success criteria are not always precise enough and the link with the budget is not always made clear.
- 47 Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through a good programme of formal visits, which are reported back to teachers and the governing body. They are able to judge the school's performance regularly and carefully in relation to the school improvement plan and know what needs to be done to sustain improvement. The governing body does not yet, however, contribute directly to the school improvement plan although this is planned for the future. Governors take their role as a critical friend seriously, but at the same time offer good support to the school and its staff. All statutory requirements are met.
- 48 Provision for special educational needs is well managed. All aspects of the administration of special educational needs are well organised. Documentation is up-to-date, and individual education plans are working documents that are regularly reviewed and updated. The link governor is well informed and supports the school well in this area of its work.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	667,453	Balance from previous year	14,587

Total expenditure	652,866
Expenditure per pupil	2,659

Balance carried forward to the next	(49,242)
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- 49 The governors and the headteacher work together to ensure that all available resources are used to meet the clearly identified educational priorities. The school applies the principles of best value in all aspects of its work. The school set a deficit budget in negotiation with the local education authority in order to meet agreed educational priorities and has organised a grant to be paid over three years to ensure continued school development.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE (nursery and reception classes)

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

The Foundation Stage is well staffed. Each class has a teaching assistant and assistants to provide one-to-one support for children with special needs. Parents and students give additional support. Children enter the nursery with attainment broadly in line with national standards. Teaching is good, and often very good, in all areas of learning. Teachers and assistants work closely together in each year group. Their strong commitment to developing the children's personal, social and emotional skills enables the children to become confident, independent and enthusiastic learners who relate well to each other and to adults. Teachers have high expectations and provide a rich and varied curriculum well matched to the needs of the children.

Children with special needs are well supported by adults and other children alike. They take a full part in the activities provided and benefit from well-planned individual programmes and the support of knowledgeable and sensitive assistants. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Very thorough assessment arrangements ensure that planning and teaching are focused on the next steps in learning. However, communication between the two teams of adults in the nursery and reception classes tends to be informal. As a result, coherent assessment, monitoring and planning across the whole Foundation Stage has not yet been developed thoroughly. This is partly because the nursery and reception bases are at opposite ends of the school making day-to-day communication difficult. A co-ordinator has been appointed to ensure greater continuity in planning and management.

Accommodation in the nursery is very good, spacious and with good access to a secure and attractive outside area. The reception classrooms, which have an additional shared wet area between them, provide a good learning environment but children have no access to an outside play area during most of the day. Resources are good, enhancing the children's opportunities to learn in all areas. Staff work closely with parents and value the very positive contribution they make to their children's learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because all the highly committed staff take every opportunity to develop the children's skills through very good teaching and through being very good role models.
- The children's personal, social and emotional skills enable them to be effective learners in all other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

50 The good and better teaching enables children to make very good progress so that by the end of their reception year many will exceed the expected goal in this area of learning. Staff share a consistent approach to promoting personal, social and emotional development, providing a calm and relaxed environment with well established routines: children feel secure and develop independence. Children are often able to negotiate with each other without any

adult intervention. Teachers use every opportunity to praise acts of consideration and kindness as well as sustained effort and application. Children respond well, treating each other with respect and co-operating with adults. The high quality of the planned activities ensures that children are eager to learn and that they concentrate well. Behaviour is very good as a result of the staff's high expectations and very clear understanding of young children's development.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that opportunities to develop the children's communication skills are built into all activities.
- The teaching of phonics in the reception classes is very good.
- Teaching of emergent writing is good.

Commentary

- 51 Teaching and learning are good and as a result children make good progress and achieve well. By the time they enter Year 1, children will meet the expected learning goals, and many will exceed them. Teachers plan a wide range of activities to promote good communication skills. They use praise and encouragement to develop the children's skills in listening and taking turns. Pencils and paper are available in all role-play settings so that children can explore and experiment with words and texts. Children develop a very good understanding of stories and non-fiction texts.
- 52 Reception children discussed their experiences of the Family Fun Day and used drawings and emergent writing to record the events, reading them back the next day after their teacher had made them into a book, *Our Fabulous Fun Day*. Teachers make learning phonics fun and use well-chosen computer programs to reinforce learning so that the children have good phonic knowledge, write simple familiar words accurately and make good attempts at more complex words. Careful assessment ensures that children are given challenging but attainable goals and they make good progress in their reading.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- A strong emphasis is placed on learning through practical experiences.
- Teachers build mathematical experiences into many areas of learning.

Commentary

- 53 Children make good progress as a result of the good teaching and will meet the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of reception, most

children are counting and recognising numerals up to 10, and often beyond, and are exploring the concept and vocabulary of addition and subtraction. They are able to compare quantities, recognise and create patterns, are familiar with flat and solid shapes and can describe different positions. Teachers plan a good range of practical activities to reinforce and extend the children's learning. In reception the teacher helped children develop methods of solving problems as they sang *Six currant buns in the baker's shop* and used coins to work out prices and the amount of change. In the nursery adults constantly use correct mathematical language in activities such as cooking or when playing games outside so that children learn to use appropriate mathematical language confidently.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan carefully to ensure that the children have a very wide range of experiences.
- Teachers have very good questioning skills and this means that the children's understanding is constantly extended.

Commentary

54 The good teaching enables children to make good progress. By the end of their reception year children will meet, and in many cases exceed, the expected learning goals. A rich environment within school and a range of stimulating visits outside mean that the children develop an interest in and an understanding of the world around them. They are encouraged to observe, investigate and question. Colourful displays in the reception classrooms record a visit to a nearby forest in photographs, drawings and writing and show how the children were able to observe, find out about and identify features in the natural world. A cookery session in the nursery developed the children's awareness of similarities, differences and change as the ingredients were mixed together. Teachers are skilled at providing a range of materials and tools so that the children develop skills in building and constructing many different objects and at intervening at the right moment so that the children learn to evaluate and improve on what they have done. Children have good opportunities to use computers and programmable toys.

Example of outstanding practice

A Year R lesson in which children learnt more about water

In this outstanding lesson the teacher used the theme of water to address a series of learning objectives. Her clarity of purpose and focus ensured that all the children achieved highly during the lesson. Her introduction held the children spellbound as she introduced them to water filtering and her skilful questioning enabled the children to recall earlier activities and to build on previous learning. The group activities that followed were skilfully chosen, with clear learning objectives, to extend the children's understanding. They enabled the children to work independently and at a good pace but also gave opportunities for the teacher to intervene with challenging questions. The teacher gave clear instructions to the adult helpers so that they too made a very good contribution to the children's learning. The children responded to the teacher's very high expectations with excellent behaviour and by taking a great pride in their achievements.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- All children achieve well and enjoy physical activities.
- Access to outside play is limited in reception.
- Children develop good fine motor skills.

Commentary

55 Children make good progress as a result of the good teaching. By the time they enter Year 1, children will meet the expected learning goals and in many cases exceed them. The outdoor nursery accommodation is good, provision in the reception is satisfactory. Staff assess and monitor children's physical development so that they are able to identify challenging but achievable goals. They celebrate achievements so that the children are eager to try new activities. In the nursery outside area a teacher celebrated a child's success when she walked on stilts for the first time saying, "Look at you balancing!" and immediately other children started to have a go as well.

56 Children are encouraged to assess their own achievements and improve their performance. In one reception class, children reviewed the objectives for the day and agreed that they had got better at throwing beanbags. There was then a discussion on whether it was easier to throw a beanbag over or underarm. At the school sports day the children in reception took part in their races with confidence, dexterity and enjoyment. Whilst the reception classes do not have direct access to an outside area, teachers make good and regular use of the school's new and attractive play equipment. The teachers provide many opportunities for the children to develop their fine motor skills and give good guidance and support so that by the end of the reception year children handle pencils, paintbrushes, glue and scissors well. Teachers choose programs and activities that develop the children's mouse handling and keyboard skills so that the children use computers with enthusiasm and confidence.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Teachers provide a stimulating range of role play activities.
- The children experience a rich variety of art and craft activities.

Commentary

57 The good teaching enables children to make good progress and achieve well, so that by the end of their reception year they are meeting, and in many cases exceeding, the early learning goals. All staff work hard and successfully to teach the children the skills they need and to stimulate their creativity. They provide a wide range of materials, which enable the children to explore colour, texture, shape, form and space. Adults encourage children to observe closely so that in the reception classes the children produced sensitive and well-executed pictures in the style of Van Gogh and pastel pictures in the style of Kandinsky. Teachers ensure that there are many opportunities for imaginative

play in the regularly changed role play areas and with small play equipment. As a result, children develop their skills in expressing their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Teachers introduce a wide range of music-making activities and action songs so that the children learn to sing from memory, recognise repeated sounds and patterns and match movement to music. One reception class sang enthusiastically in their assembly in front of the whole school, with good diction, tune and expression. The reception children also benefit from a weekly lesson with the very skilled specialist music teacher.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 3.
- The overall quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve well.
- Most pupils work hard and show good attitudes in lessons.
- Teaching of reading is inconsistent.

Commentary

- 58 Year 2 test results have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection when standards were above average. Standards in writing have been above or well above the national average since 2000, while standards in reading have been in line with or above the national average. Standards in the present Year 2 are average in reading, above average in speaking and listening and well above average in writing. Standards in writing, speaking and listening are above those expected for pupils in Year 3 and as expected in reading.
- 59 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons are well planned with clear targets and tasks adjusted appropriately for groups of differing ability. Teachers offer good role models in their own speech and writing. While they explain language features clearly, teachers do not always spread their questions well enough to involve pupils across the ability range. Study texts are well chosen for the quality of their language and their appeal to boys and girls alike.
- 60 In some lessons, particularly in Year 3 where teaching is satisfactory overall, lessons are not well enough structured to allow for a good balance between independent work and direct teaching. In these lessons, pupils spend too long sitting listening to teachers resulting in too little time for written tasks. As a result, some pupils lose interest and sometimes resort to silly behaviour. Although teachers regularly mark pupils' work, the quality of marking is inconsistent in showing pupils how they can improve and corrections are rarely followed up.
- 61 There is an inconsistent approach to the teaching or organisation of reading in the school, which leads to some inconsistent achievement as pupils move through the school. While pupils with special educational needs are heard to read regularly in

school, some other pupils report that they do not read very often to adults in the classroom and that activities such as guided reading in groups are not regular features. As a result, standards in reading are not as good as those in writing.

- 62 Letter-sound patterns are taught using a published scheme but pupils are sometimes reluctant to use these, saying that they prefer to ask an adult for the word. A teacher in one lesson spent too much time writing spellings in pupils' own dictionaries rather than challenging them to find the words from provided sources while she focused on the learning objectives as pupils worked on the written task. Teachers do not always expect pupils to apply the reading skills they are taught. Although books are appropriately graded for difficulty so that pupils progress in small steps, the range is too limited to ensure high interest, and to challenge further pupils of higher attainment. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and are well supported by their parents at home. Library skills are well taught, but there are too few opportunities for pupils, particularly those in Year 3, to carry out independent research.
- 63 Pupils generally use a good range of vocabulary and sentence structures in their speech, and this is reflected in their writing. Almost all pupils write successfully for a wide range of purposes by the end of Year 2, and a good number achieve the level above that expected for their age. Higher attaining pupils achieve very well in writing long stories using speech and description for dramatic effect. Standards in spelling and punctuation are very good overall. By the end of Year 2 and Year 3 many pupils use a joined script because handwriting skills are regularly taught. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because individual education plans set out specific targets, for which they are well supported in lessons.
- 64 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Although the co-ordinator has monitored the quality of teaching and learning, this is not yet sufficiently regular or rigorous to find any areas of weakness and to identify and share good practice.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 65 The structure of some lessons in geography and religious education, for instance, leaves pupils with too little time for independent research or for writing. However, some very good examples were seen in pupils' books of pupils applying and developing writing skills in subjects such as history, geography, design and technology and ICT. Pupils use computers to write poetry using different fonts, colours and styles to make their work more attractive to the reader. High quality writing in history is imaginative and interesting, and spelling and punctuation skills are well applied.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good assessment identifies strengths and weaknesses and informs future teaching.
- Good analysis of test results has improved standards.
- The subject is well co-ordinated.

Commentary

- 66 Good preparatory work has been done in the nursery and reception classes and most pupils enter Year 1 Stage 1 having achieved the Early Learning Goals for Mathematical Development. Pupils continue to make good progress. National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds from 2001 to 2003 indicate that Year 2 pupils' performance is in line with the national average with pupils of higher attainment doing well. There is little difference between boys' and girls' results. Raw percentage results for 2004 show that the performance of middle ability pupils has improved, lifting standards for the whole cohort. Year 3 optional SATs results for 2004 indicate that the pupils have made good progress over the year with 60% of pupils reaching Level 3. These improvements have resulted from an analysis of test performance leading to improved and modified planning for teaching and learning.
- 67 Teaching and learning overall is good. In Year 1 pupils make good progress in the development of their understanding of number, measurement and space. Teachers match the pupils' work well to previous attainment so that they achieve well. Pupils enjoy their activities and respond well to consistent and well-established routines. Teachers in all mathematics lessons use pupils to make teaching points, which ensures that all pupils are fully involved in their learning. Good practical activities are backed up by good questioning, which encourages pupils to think for themselves and extend the pupils' learning. The sharing out of chocolate bars gave good relevance to a lesson on real life problems using halving.
- 68 The pace is maintained in Year 2 and teachers ensure that the pupils have a wide range of mathematical experiences. The work is differentiated so that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are challenged appropriately. Work on time is planned at different levels so that while one group is working on half and quarter hours another group is focusing on hours and half hours. This means that all the pupils are suitably challenged. As a new initiative all pupils have calculation books in which they practise applying their mathematical knowledge to everyday life and this has helped them to tackle questions in the national tests for seven-year-olds more confidently and successfully. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3 and the key objectives for the year are met by most children and exceeded by the pupils of higher attainment. Pupils in all year groups have very positive attitudes and work hard. Their books are well organised and their work is well presented showing that they take a pride in their achievements.
- 69 Leadership and management are good. The well-established co-ordinator monitors the curriculum well and gives her colleagues good support. She uses her analysis of test results to fine tune teaching and planning and to target specific groups of children. As a result, attainment is improving. There are good opportunities for in-service training.
- 70 Resources are good and the Mathematical Games Library enriches pupils' experiences. The very good range of games is available for pupils to take home and the games are also used in the classrooms. ICT is used effectively in the teaching of mathematics with well-chosen software and use of equipment such as the programmable toy, to explore position, direction and movement. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 71 The school's current focus on using and applying mathematics means that the pupils' mathematics skills are promoted across the curriculum. A data handling activity in Year 3 linked work in science and ICT very successfully. However, this is a developing initiative and a priority of the co-ordinator is to ensure that the pupils' numeracy skills are developed through other subjects in the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Higher attaining pupils achieve well.
- Good planning ensures effective coverage of the science curriculum.
- The development of pupils' investigative skills is sometimes hampered by weak teacher knowledge in this area.
- Work is not always matched to pupils' abilities.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

- 72 The performance of pupils in the 2004 assessments shows an improvement over the previous year. Standards overall in Years 2 and 3 are in line with the national average. However, the percentage of pupils in Year 2 attaining the higher level in the national assessments is above the national average. Higher attaining pupils achieve well, due to an improvement in provision for these pupils since the last inspection. Pupils of other abilities achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs make as much progress as other pupils, but only when they are supported in the lesson by a teaching assistant or are given work matched to their abilities. There is no discernable difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
- 73 In Year 2 pupils acquire sound scientific knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of science within the National Curriculum. They learn about health and growth, using electricity, different materials, variation, plants and animals in the local environment, and forces and movement. In investigating the relation between forces and movement, by rolling toy vehicles down a ramp, pupils show that they are beginning to form notions of fair testing by keeping the ramp at the same angle and using the same method of release for the vehicles. They are learning basic scientific skills. They make careful observations, measure using standard units of measurement, present their results in a table and use a computer program to produce a block graph from their results. In Year 3 pupils extend their scientific knowledge and understanding. They learn about magnets, springs, light and shadows, materials, rocks and soils, teeth and eating, and helping plants to grow well.
- 74 Pupils enjoy their science lessons and work well together during the practical sessions. There is appropriate emphasis given to practical science. Nonetheless, pupils have less understanding of the experimental and investigative aspects of science than they have of other aspects of the subject. This is because some teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge to enhance pupils' skills in this area.

- 75 Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good lessons seen. In one of the good lessons, effective planning by the teacher ensured that pupils were given tasks matched to their abilities. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with learning difficulties were well supported in the lesson by skilled teaching assistants to ensure appropriate challenge and support for all pupils. The work in pupils' books indicates that quite often all pupils are given the same tasks at the same level of difficulty. This results in lower attaining pupils finding the work too difficult and higher attaining pupils not being sufficiently challenged.
- 76 The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator knows the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has a clear vision for its development. She checks standards by examining teachers' planning and sampling pupils' work but has not had the opportunity to observe any teaching in the subject. Assessment is done at the end of each unit of work and pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school. The co-ordinator maintains a portfolio of pupils' work but this needs to be assessed according to levels in the National Curriculum if it is to be useful in helping teachers check the standards of their pupils' work. Good use is made of the schools' grounds, especially the *Secret Garden*, as a means of developing pupils' interest in science within the local environment. Resources for teaching the subject are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well planned with good cross-curricular links.
- Use of the ICT suite should be better planned.
- There has been good improvement in all aspects of the subject since the last inspection.

Commentary

- 77 Standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils have gained good experience of computers in the nursery and reception classes and many also have computers at home. Progress is satisfactory. Most pupils achieve the national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 3. At the end of Year 2 pupils talk about the work they do on computers across a range of subjects and describe enthusiastically how they programmed the roamer to make its way back to the classroom from the hall. They understand how to use computers but are unsure how ICT is used in a wider context in their daily lives. They can use text, tables and images, but not sound, to present their own ideas and they know how to retrieve, but not to enter information from a database. A Year 3 class enjoyed using email to send invitations to their parents for the end of term leavers' concert. In all year groups pupils use the Internet confidently to access information for their topic work. ICT is used well to support pupils with special educational needs and specialist equipment is available where needed.
- 78 There are two computers in each classroom and the ICT suite is well equipped with 16 computers. All the computers are networked. Classes are timetabled to use the suite in the afternoons, usually half of them at a time, which means that most pupils only use the suite once a fortnight. This means that a major resource is not used well enough. The co-ordinator is aware that the pupils do not have enough access and the school has

purchased eight laptop computers, which will be used from September to allow whole classes to work on computers at the same time.

- 79 The quality of teaching and learning is good. The very competent co-ordinator supports other staff so that lessons are well planned and ICT is used appropriately in many areas of the curriculum. Pupils use a good range of instruction sheets confidently. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and give the pupils good support. Assessment is well used to inform future planning. Pupils enjoy using ICT and are keen to learn new skills.
- 80 The subject is well led and managed and the co-ordinator organises regular meetings and training for teachers so that they have good knowledge of the subject. Training is also made available to teaching assistants so that they give very good support in lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 81 Pupils use their ICT skills in other subjects. Pupils are given good opportunities to use the word processor to draft and redraft their work in English. In science, teachers introduce well-chosen and appropriate database activities so that the pupils can order, analyse and interpret a range of information. Very good use is made of the Internet to develop research skills in topic work. Suitable software for art and design enables pupils to create well-planned pictures and patterns. In mathematics a programmable toy is popular with the pupils and with it they develop a good understanding of position, direction and movement. ICT is also used well across the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs with necessary adaptations to hardware being made and a good range of appropriate programs.

HUMANITIES

- 82 Timetabling arrangements during the inspection meant that it was only possible to see two **geography** lessons, in Year 2, and one **history** lesson in Year 3. The quality of teaching in these lessons was good in history and satisfactory in geography. These, together with all other evidence indicates that the satisfactory standards at the end of Year 2 reported at the time of the last inspection have improved and that pupils achieve well. The achievement of pupils in the Year 3 lesson observed was satisfactory. There was too little time and resources for pupils to carry out independent research. Pupils were taught as a whole class for more than half an hour, when this time could have been better used to challenge understanding and develop skills at different levels as they worked on group or individual tasks.
- 83 Completed work shows that pupils in all year groups are usually given good opportunities to write in history and geography and that they respond well to this. Some good marking was seen where teachers pay due account to pupils' spelling and punctuation, ensuring that the subjects contribute to their writing skills. Work in books and on display shows that through the year, pupils' simple research and mapping skills are generally well developed through an interesting range of topics such as comparing the lives of rural and city children in Kenya, studying how the local area has changed over the years, and life during Ancient Egyptian, Viking and Victorian times. Teachers make an increasing use of ICT for pupils to research their work. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to support the curriculum and pupils' learning. Visits such as to the local environment and the local agricultural college, and the use of nature trails

and visits from 'Medieval' and African musicians, do much to enrich pupils' experiences and their social and cultural development.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject provides well for pupils' moral development.
- The subject is not taught in sufficient depth and pupils often forget facts about religions studied.
- Pupils do not have enough time to research the subject using books and ICT.

Commentary

- 84 Due to timetabling arrangements it was possible to see only two lessons during the inspection. Teaching and learning were good in one and satisfactory in the other. Evidence, including discussions with pupils, indicates that the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and that standards meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Although pupils are taught facts about different faiths, there is a need for a greater range of big books and simple research materials so that they can find information for themselves which they can discuss and record in their own words. The lack of these resources results in pupils having to spend a lot of time sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher and consequently, some lose concentration.
- 85 An analysis of planning and discussions with teachers indicate that the curriculum is covered and meets statutory requirements. The school teaches Christianity and other faiths in isolation, so that pupils' knowledge and understanding is disjointed and they have too few opportunities to learn *from* religion as well as *about* religion. In the two lessons seen, where pupils were studying stories from the New Testament, teachers challenged pupils to consider the feelings of the different characters in the parables of *The Prodigal Son* and *The Good Samaritan*. Talking partners were well used for discussion and pupils came up with some well-considered thoughts. As a result, the lessons made a good contribution to their spiritual and moral development. The use of worksheets in lessons limits pupils' opportunities to think or to write, and is not necessary for the many pupils who are already capable writers.
- 86 The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has identified the need for closer links with other subjects such as English, so that the subject can be taught to sufficient depth. She is also aware that there needs to be a great range of books and artefacts to stimulate pupils' interest in the activities, rituals, literature and practices of the variety of religions studied. Good links with a local church result in visiting speakers to support assemblies and visits by pupils to the church. Year 2 pupils have visited a synagogue to support their understanding of the Jewish faith. Assemblies are well used to help pupils understand that a feature of Christianity and other faiths is that of caring for one another and the environment. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 87 Timetabling arrangements during the inspection meant that it was only possible to see two lessons in **art and design** and none in **design and technology**. It is not possible, therefore to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching. Judgements are made on standards based on a review of work and planning and interviews with staff.

- 88 Displays of artwork around the school and other examples of pupils' work indicate that standards in **art and design** are above national expectations by Year 2 and Year 3, an improvement since the last inspection. The art curriculum is much improved and there are good links between art and other subjects. Pupils experience a broad curriculum using different materials and techniques. Pupils can, for example, use chalk on a paint background to produce good observational drawings of a vase of flowers. They produced three-dimensional clay squares effectively expressing the theme of textures within the local environment and experimented with tie-dye patterns.
- 89 The teaching in both lessons seen was good. In the Year 2 lesson pupils were involved in different art activities. Some pupils recreated an African picture using silhouettes on a wash background, some were drawing pictures to camouflage a sweet, and others used batik techniques to create an African design on a waistcoat. Pupils were engrossed in what they were doing and were making good efforts to improve and refine their work.
- 90 The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. She monitors effectively but has not had the opportunity to observe any teaching in the subject. Sound links have been made between art and other subjects in order to make the whole curriculum more creative and enjoyable. For example, pupils use a painting computer program to produce pictures in the styles of Kandinsky, Mondrian and Matisse. Art Week ensures that the subject maintains a high profile in school.
- 91 The **design and technology** work displayed, together with other examples of pupils' work, indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and that standards are in line with national expectations for Years 2 and 3. Planning documents show that all aspects of the subject are taught in sufficient depth. Pupils are involved in planning, making and evaluating their work and produce products of a satisfactory quality such as hand puppets and wheeled vehicles. Sometimes the work is linked to topics in art and in science. When pupils make pizza bread, for example, they look at the properties of materials as they change as a result of heating.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The school employs a specialist music teacher.
- There is a good enrichment programme.

Commentary

- 92 Standards are high throughout the school and are above the national expectations for children of their age. The subject is taught by a specialist musician and the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Pupils develop good technical knowledge and rise to the challenge to improve their performance because of the teacher's very good subject knowledge and expertise. As a result of her high expectations pupils in a Year 2 class used the words crotchet and quaver confidently and were able to clap complex rhythms accurately. Pupils are accustomed to evaluating their own performance and

using the evaluation to make improvements so that they make good progress. In a recorder lesson for Year 3 pupils, the teacher recorded the pupils' playing on a mini CD and then asked them to suggest improvements to their performance. All pupils achieve well and the needs of pupils with special needs are addressed sensitively and successfully so that they are well-integrated in lessons. The pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy making music. In assemblies the pupils sing in tune with expression and a good sense of rhythm and with obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm.

- 93 The subject is well led and managed. There are good cross-curricular links. The co-ordinator and the specialist teacher plan together to ensure that music lessons are linked to other areas of the curriculum. In Year 2, a lesson was linked to their African topic and the pupils learned to sing the song, *Oh, what does the crocodile have for tea?* In a Year 1 class, the teacher used a rhythm graph to support the pupils as they worked out the rhythm of words linked to various numbers of syllables linked to forms of transport which they played on a good range of percussion instruments.
- 94 The school invites a wide range of visitors to perform to the pupils, some of these being parents who are very supportive and proud of the school's achievements, and this means that pupils experience a wide variety of music. Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in the Norwich Schools Music Festival, singing and recorder playing. Last year, the school worked with a musical improvisation group. Year 3 pupils are offered the opportunity to learn the recorder and most are keen to do so and play regularly in assemblies. All these activities ensure that pupils learn to perform well in front of an audience. Resources are good.

Physical Education

- 95 Timetabling arrangements during the inspection, meant that in **physical education** it was only possible to see one lesson in dance, two in gymnastics, as well as the school sports day. The weakness in the teaching of gymnastics is that, following stimulating warm up sessions, pupils are left to queue to take their turn on the apparatus. This slows the pace of work and diminishes the effects of warm up sessions. In the good Year 3 lesson seen, the teacher structured her lesson well so that pupils benefited from a good amount of physical activity and opportunities to evaluate their own and other's work. This lesson was imaginatively linked to the story *The Wind in the Willows* and contributed well to pupils' interest in reading good texts.
- 96 The sport's day was highly organised involving staff and parents who worked very effectively together for the enjoyment of the pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational and physical needs, were fully included and were very happy to take part. A very strong feature was that no pupil was concerned about not winning. The efforts of all were appreciated and applauded, and all received awards for their efforts. The skills of many Year 2 and Year 3 pupils are above those expected in dance and gymnastics. Pupils enjoy all aspects of the physical education programme. Most work very well together and behave well in lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

- 97 Timetabling arrangements during the inspection meant that it was not possible to see any lessons in PSHE. Judgements are based, therefore, on a review of school documents and a discussion with the co-ordinator, who is responsible for the teaching of the subject from the nursery to Year 3. The development of PSHE is a priority of the

school and the co-ordinator has carried out a review to establish how it can be built into every subject of the curriculum. The programme begins in the nursery and reception class to ensure coherent development throughout the school. Circle time discussions are planned into each class every week alongside timetabled PSHE lessons. There is a clear policy for drugs education, which is addressed more directly in science in Years 2 and 3. The school nurse talks to pupils about how to look after themselves and representatives from outside agencies, such as the police and fire services and the Broads Water authority, visit the school. Pupils' experiences are also widened by trips to, for example, the town's fire station. The co-ordinator is planning to introduce a school council in the autumn term for pupils from Reception to Year 3. Appropriate provision is made for sex and drugs education.

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	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).