

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School**  
Stamford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique Reference Number: 120610

Headteacher: Mr. Thomas G. Jordan

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Reporting inspector: Mr. Brian Aldridge

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707587

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

Type of control: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kesteven Road  
Stamford  
Lincolnshire  
PE9 1SR

Telephone number: 01780 762094

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. Stephen Bingham

Date of previous inspection: January 1996

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mr. Brian Aldridge, Registered Inspector	Equal opportunities  English Art Special educational needs	Attainment and progress  Teaching Leadership and management Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community The curriculum and assessment
Mrs. Patricia Willman, Lay Inspector		
Mrs. Judy Dawson	Areas of learning for children under five Mathematics Geography Music History Science	
Mr. Robert Green	Design and technology Information technology Physical education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency of the school

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is at least good in eight out of every ten lessons and very good, with some excellent features in half of these lessons.
- By the time pupils are eleven, standards in English are well above the national average and in mathematics and science attainment is above average.
- Pupils make good progress overall in the junior classes and very good progress in English, history and art.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent and their behaviour, relationships and personal development are very good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and the support and guidance offered to pupils is also very good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The use of time at the start of the day is inefficient and too little time is given to physical education.
- II. The school's development plan is not sufficiently detailed.
- III. The governors' monitoring and evaluation procedures are not strong enough.

**This is a good and improving school, which has many significant strengths.** There are no key issues; the minor weaknesses identified will be considered by the governors for inclusion in the school's action plan which will be sent to all parents.

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Most aspects of the school's work have improved since the last inspection. Attainment is improving; the measures taken to increase the rate of progress have been effective. Pupils' personal development has improved; thought satisfactory to good at the last inspection it is now very good overall and pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. The quality of education, including teaching, was judged to be satisfactory overall and is now good with very good features, particularly at Key Stage 2. Of the key issues identified in the last inspection:

- more able pupils are now set challenging work which stretches them;
- the steps taken to improve the quality of teaching of the younger pupils have been effective to some extent; teaching in this part of the school is now satisfactory overall;
- the procedures for controlling and monitoring the spending on educational resources are now very good; the procedures and the steps the governing body have taken have proved very effective;
- resource provision and quality are now good;
- the school development plan still maintains a large number of initiatives but the managers and governing body are now using a more strategic viewpoint to plan the school's work; and
- the provision for pupils' cultural development is now good, an improvement from the less than satisfactory provision seen in the last inspection.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and its capacity to improve is good.

- **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	-	Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
			<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E
English	A	C		
Mathematics	C	E		
Science	D	E		

The table shows, for instance, that when compared to schools nationally, standards in English were well above average, average for mathematics and below average for science. The inspection team found that standards in English are well above average and in mathematics, science and information technology are above average. At Key Stage 1 standards in English and mathematics are above average and in science and information technology are average. Children enter the school attaining above average standards and make satisfactory progress in the core subjects in reception and at Key Stage 1. In most of the other subjects progress is good at Key Stage 1. Progress increases at Key Stage 2 and is good overall; it is very good in English, art and history.

- **QUALITY OF TEACHING**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Very good
Science		Good	Very good
Information technology		Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection, with eight out of every ten lessons being taught at least well, half of which were taught very well and some of which had excellent features. The high quality teaching of children under five has been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall although there are differences between classes and between teachers who teach the same class. At this key stage, six out of every ten lessons are taught well and one in ten is taught very well. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good. In eight of every ten lessons teaching is at least good and in half of those, teaching is very good and in some lessons in Years 5 and 6 teaching is at times excellent. In Years 3, 5 and 6 in particular, the quality of teaching and the commitment to high standards is a key feature of all lessons.

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



- **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Very good, with pupils developing a reasoned attitude towards the need for good behaviour.
Attendance	Good.
Ethos*	Very good overall; pupils' attitudes are excellent. The school is a civilised, caring place of learning where all pupils are valued and respected.
Leadership and management	Good leadership and management from the headteacher, key stage co-ordinators and governing body.
Curriculum	Good, with teachers planning good use of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good progress based on very good provision from learning support assistants and class teachers.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good overall, with the provision for moral and social development very good and that for spiritual and cultural development good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall, with the arrangements for professional development being very good.
Value for money	Good.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

- **The parents' views of the school**

**What most parents like about the school**

- The school successfully encourages children to adopt positive moral attitudes.
- Children find the staff approachable and helpful.
- Children are set homework which is helpful to their progress.
- Good behaviour is encouraged
- Parents are welcomed into the school.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- The school does not handle complaints well and
- Some parents were concerned about the slow rate and aged classes
- Some parents expressed concern about the lack of

The inspection team confirms parents' positive views about the school. The school tries hard to meet parents' views and is interested in what parents' have to say about the school's work. Parents should not be concerned about the rate of progress in mixed age classes. Teachers plan very well to meet pupils' individual needs whilst maintaining very high expectations. Inspectors agree that there is too little time for physical education.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

**Review the timetable arrangements for the beginning of the school day, and the amount of time available for physical education.**

*[See paragraphs 34, 38 and 132]*

**Complement the governing body's informal methods of monitoring and evaluation by adding systems that are timetabled and clear to all governors and members of staff.**

*[See paragraphs 59 and 60]*

**Improve the already satisfactory progress of the under-fives by:**

- making more detailed assessments of the strengths and weaknesses in individual children's learning;
- making more flexible use of the learning day to give children more time to follow their interests.

*[See paragraph 82]*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is situated in the town of Stamford. It accepts children from a wide geographical area, many of whom use transport to travel to school. About 50 pupils travel from Bourne and Market Deeping and a few from Peterborough. There are 117 boys and 89 girls, 206 pupils in all, taught in seven classes by nine teachers, eight of whom are full time, including the headteacher. About two percent of the pupils are known to have an entitlement to free school meals and six pupils come from ethnic minority families; both groups are low in comparison to national averages. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, 13%, is also low when compared to national figures. At the time of the last inspection there were 205 pupils in the school. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five years old. At the time of inspection there were 23 children under five years of age. Children are well prepared for school, many of them having attended some form of pre-school provision and they enter achieving above the levels normally expected of children of this age. At the time of inspection there was a supply teacher covering maternity leave in Year 4.
2. The school's motto is:  
Laborare est orare - To work is to pray.
3. St Augustine's Mission Statement commits the school to:  
Living by Gospel Values in the Catholic Tradition;  
Developing individual potential; and  
The partnership of home, school, parish and the wider community.
4. The Aims of the school:  
St Augustine's was founded because of the desire of the whole Catholic community to provide education rooted firmly in the teachings of the Church. We aim to help our children to learn with confidence, understanding and self-discipline and to grow as caring individuals.

The teachings of the Church are developed through the religious education programme and the daily life of the school. Here we foster ways of caring for each other. We share the Gospel of Jesus both through celebrations of the Liturgy and through service to others.

We aim to develop an attitude which is opposed to discrimination against any individual or group on grounds of socio-economic background, creed, ethnic origin or sex.

We aim to have an understanding of our own and other beliefs and cultures

We aim to help children develop their full potential in all curricular and extra curricular activities.

5. The school development plan sets out the following areas for improvement:

- the introduction and development of the national numeracy strategy;
- the national grid for learning;
- review of the National Curriculum
- the introduction of a new system of appraisal for all teaching staff
- the development of a prayer area and internal refurbishment of the school;
- presentations are to be developed for parents;
- the design of a school website, and in general
- raising pupils' attainment and the involvement of the school in JC 2000.

1. The school has set the following targets for the academic year 1999-2000:  
At Key Stage 1 that 94% of all pupils should achieve Level 2 in English and mathematics and at Key Stage 2 that 78% of all pupils should achieve Level 4 in English and mathematics.

6. **Key indicators**

**Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	10	28
	(98)	(21)	(16)	(37)

6. <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	18 (19)	18 (19)	17 (18)
At NC Level 2 or above	Girls	8 (16)	9 (16)	8 (16)
	Total	26 (35)	27 (35)	25 (34)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (92)	96 (92)	92 (89)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

6. <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	(19)	(20)	(19)
at NC Level 2 or above	Girls	(16)	(16)	(16)
	Total	(35)	(36)	(35)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (92)	93 (95)	93 (92)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

.....

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	12	28
	(98)	(16)	(20)	(36)

<b>6. National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	13 (9)	12 (12)	13 (15)
	Girls	12 (14)	8 (10)	9 (13)
	Total	25 (23)	20 (22)	22 (28)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	89 (64)	71 (61)	79 (78)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>6. Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	11	10	9
	Total	24	22	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	86 (NA)	79 (NA)	82 (NA)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

### 6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	4.7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6.

### 6. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	1
	Permanent	0

### 6. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	42
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

## 6. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### 6. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### 6. **Attainment and progress**

2. In the National Curriculum tests held at the end of Year 6 in 1999, the performance of the pupils in English was well above average, in mathematics it was average and in science it was below the national average. The results for English improved over those attained in 1998. Those for mathematics and science remained the same achieved in 1998. When compared to similar schools results in English were in line with the national average and mathematics and science well below. As with the national comparisons the results improved from well below the average for English. The standards attained at eleven in 1999 take the school back to levels of attainment seen before 1998. In that year results in English and mathematics in particular were average compared to schools nationally and when compared to similar schools were well below average. Since last year attainment has improved overall and for all groups including boys and girls alike. Attainment has improved since the last inspection and the school has set itself demanding targets for the coming year. In the National Curriculum tests held at the end of 1999 in Year 2, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 2 or above was very high in reading and writing and above average in mathematics, when compared to schools nationally. When compared to similar schools attainment was well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics.
3. The inspection team found that by the time that pupils are eleven standards in English are well above the national average and in mathematics, science and information technology are above the national average. By the end of Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and average in information technology.
4. Children enter the school broadly achieving above average levels although the full range of attainment is represented in each year group. The majority communicates well and has experienced some form of pre-school education before entering St Augustine's in September of the year in which they are five. Most children have achieved the Desirable Outcomes for Learning for five-year-olds and are ready for the next stage in their education. Most of their work is planned within the first levels of the National Curriculum. Children make sound progress and maintain their good levels of attainment throughout their year in the reception class; they start Year 1 at higher than average levels. In the reception class children speak and listen well. They speak in complete sentences and have a wide vocabulary, which they use well to express themselves. They understand that writing is a way of conveying meaning and many recognise the first letters of words. The vast majority of pupils are used to 'reading' books, retell stories by using the pictures or by adding to the words they do know. They are enthusiastic users of books. Many of them count to ten and the majority adds two numbers to total ten. They understand and use terms to describe and compare objects by size, weight and position.
5. Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress in their creative skills. They experience a wide range of media and much of their play and work has a practical application, for example, designing wallpaper, building vehicles and playing in the 'baby clinic'. Physical skills are developed well. Demonstrating high levels of skills in balance and an awareness of space, children enjoy experimenting and their fine physical skills such as drawing, threading and cutting, are well developed. Children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world about them. They help bathe a baby and understand that the needs of young children and other young animals are greater than their own. They know about the events in their own lives and make family trees using photographs. The children's personal development is good. They learn to share, play and work co-operatively when asked and work independently if needed. They are keen to help each other when working and clear away their own and each other's work. They work very hard and always try hard to do better.
6. Children with special needs are identified early through initial assessment when they start school. They receive very good support from the teacher and support assistants, enabling them to make very good progress and to gain a sense of achievement and pride in what they do.

7. Overall pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. Throughout the school they are given lots of opportunities to talk to each other and to listen to good quality story telling and adults setting good examples, as well as each other in a range of situations. They finish their time at school as mature speakers who discuss a wide variety of issues sensibly and with a great level of empathy for other speakers. They are rational in their debating style and use language well to make their points. Pupils listen well; this skill is developed through the careful insistence by teachers that everyone has a right to be heard and that everyone's opinion should be valued. There are examples of pupils being asked to review their own and others' work and to pass opinions and evaluations to help improvements come about. Pupils read well throughout the school and they make good progress overall. Progress is particularly good in Key Stage 2 as pupils use what they have read to good effect in their writing. Almost all pupils have good memories; they talk knowledgeably about books and their preferences. Pupils use reading to find information about their work and from a very early stage of their work in the school understand how to use the library to good effect. Pupils make good progress in writing. By the time they are eleven they write in a range of styles and for a range of effects and audiences. Their handwriting and spelling skills are well developed and they understand the conventions of grammar and punctuation to help them write effectively. Worthy of note is the poetic writing. Whether considering war and the horrors of the battlefield or describing natural objects, pupils are able to put themselves in the place of others and write directly about experiences which they cannot possibly have encountered. Their writing is vivid and faithful.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in English. They are provided with very good support whether they are taught in their class or withdrawn and taught individually or as part of a small group. Pupils take pride in their achievements. They know that their teachers, helpers and peers will listen with appreciation and this helps develop high levels of self-esteem. The very well targeted support is based on a thorough knowledge of each pupil and this helps raise levels of attainment.
9. Mathematically pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. In the later years of the school more opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding. This helps them use number effectively and solve problems. At Key Stage 1 pupils add and subtract up to 20 and understand number order up to 100. They begin to understand the idea of multiplication and many pupils can explain the methods they use and use their knowledge to calculate accurately. The rate of progress is only satisfactory in this key stage because some lessons lack pace and therefore pupils do not work as hard as they could. By the time pupils are eleven they are expected to work hard at all times. Their mental recall of number facts is secure and most pupils in the Year 6 are already working at levels above the national average. They investigate how mathematics can be used to record and interpret data.
10. Pupils make good progress overall in science and particularly so in Key Stage 2 where they are encouraged to investigate the world around them with a sharpness of intellectual curiosity. At Key Stage 1 pupils understand about human senses and understand what they have to do to make a fair test. At Key Stage 2 pupils understand how plants reproduce through flowers. They know that matter can take a number of forms and that some materials can change from one state to another whilst other changes are irreversible. Pupils have very good investigative skills. They know how to control variables when they are testing and experimenting and their observational skills are very good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, whilst their levels of understanding are good their literacy skills are supported well by learning support assistants.
11. In information technology progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 pupils program a robot to move precise distances. They understand the sequences that have to be included and know that the order of their instructions is important. Pupils use computers to practise their number and spelling skills. Throughout the school and particularly at Key Stage 2, pupils use information technology as part of their every day school tools. Pupils experience a wide range of tasks and some develop the skills further at home on their own computers.
12. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well across the curriculum. In history and religious education they write with empathy and concern. Their spelling, handwriting and knowledge of grammar helps them construct well written pieces of work. Their highly developed reading and research skills enable them to

find information and refer to the wider reading they undertake. In subjects such as design and technology and science pupils use their measuring skills and their knowledge of how to interpret and display information.

13. At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in art. They learn how to control drawing and painting implements effectively and begin to learn about famous artists and their work. At Key Stage 2, progress in art is very good. The high quality of pupils' work is the result of very good teaching and the subject knowledge of at least one teacher being very high. This results in work in a range of media, which is stylish and very effective. In design and technology progress is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils understand that their designs should be evaluated in the light of their models and that changes can be made to improve function or aesthetics. Progress is good in geography at both key stages. Pupils understand the conventions of mapping and by the time they reach Year 6 they have good levels of understanding of a range of locations and geographical features. In their history work pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and very good progress at Key Stage 2. By the time they leave the school pupils are well versed in historical research and have very good levels of understanding about how historical information can be influenced by the writer's intentions and the reader's personal background. Progress is good in music. By the time they leave the school pupils take great enjoyment in their musical work. They are competent technically and have good levels of understanding about how to perform in concert. Their listening skills are well developed and this assists them to be considerate performers. Pupils make good progress in physical education. Their work in games, swimming, gymnastics and dance are well addressed and older pupils have opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities during field study visits.
14. Pupils of all levels of attainment make at least good progress overall. Higher attaining pupils are offered plenty of challenge in their daily work and teachers' planning caters very well for pupils who work at different rates and who attain a variety of levels. The key issue reported in the last inspection of providing higher attaining pupils with more challenge in their work has been met effectively by changes to the curriculum and a strengthening of the teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school. They are given very good support and the close working relationship between teachers and learning support assistants, is a significant feature of the programmes that are designed for each child.

19. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

15. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are excellent. Their behaviour, personal development and relationships between each other and with their teachers are very good. During their time in school the pupils develop into mature and sociable individuals who work hard to achieve their objectives. This aspect of pupils' response has improved since the last inspection and this has a very positive impact on their attainment and progress.
16. The children who are under five make good progress in their acquisition of personal and social skills. They settle quickly and happily into school, show interest in their work and become confident and inquisitive learners. In a numeracy lesson, for example, they responded with enthusiasm and persevered well with difficult tasks. They are confident and relaxed in the classroom, listen carefully to instructions and give their opinions sensibly when asked. They have very good relationships with their teachers and with each other, their behaviour is very good and they respond well to the routines of the classroom.
17. In both key stages, pupils' attitudes to their learning are excellent. They are enthusiastic and self-motivated learners who listen attentively to their teachers and willingly volunteer answers to questions. For example, in a Year 3 literacy session discussing a playscript, pupils contributed ideas enthusiastically and with a logical clarity of thought and speech. In all classes, pupils sustain concentration for long periods and respond well to the high expectations set in most lessons by persevering and trying hard to improve their standard of work. This was exemplified in a Year 2 physical education lesson when pupils were practising throwing and catching balls. They applied themselves well, with great enthusiasm and excitement, and made good progress. Pupils have the confidence to ask and answer questions, to express their own ideas and to contribute to discussions without any fear of ridicule. They listen carefully to each other without interrupting. Pupils are well motivated. They are involved in setting their own targets and,

particularly in Key Stage 2, evaluate their own progress towards these targets. Pupils' independent learning skills are very well developed. They respond well to the challenge of carrying out research and take responsibility for organising their own work. They enjoy recognition for their good work and are proud to be mentioned in the Book of the Week. Pupils with special educational needs are interested in their work and sustain concentration for an appropriate length of time. They work hard and persevere to complete tasks.

18. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is consistently very good and sometimes excellent, which confirms the view expressed by the majority of parents prior to the inspection. They play and work happily and constructively together. They understand the school's expectations of behaviour and discipline and respond very positively. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner and no bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection. One pupil was excluded for a fixed term period during the last school year. There have been no exclusions during the current school year. Pupils with special educational needs, except, on occasion, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, behave well.
19. Pupils' relationships with each other and with members of staff are very good. This contributes very effectively to the happy and purposeful atmosphere in the school. They recognise the needs and achievements of others and collaborate constructively in groups and pairs, sharing skills and resources to achieve a good standard of work. Staff treat the pupils with respect and courtesy and pupils respond in a similar manner. Relationships at all levels are relaxed and good humoured, which successfully promotes the progressively very good levels of self-confidence and self-esteem amongst the pupils.
20. Pupils' personal development is very good. They are polite and friendly to adults and to each other. They are confident, sociable and helpful individuals who accept responsibility and show initiative in a sensible and increasingly mature fashion. Year 6 pupils are conscious of their responsibility as role models for the younger pupils and keep a watchful eye on their welfare. A group of Year 4 pupils have undertaken to help and support one of their classmates, and they take this responsibility very seriously. All pupils have classroom jobs which they perform conscientiously, and older pupils contribute to the smooth running of the school community by carrying out a number of tasks, for example, in assembly and as monitors overseeing the wildlife area. Pupils are keen to show initiative. For example, in their free time, a group of boys were writing a script for a play based on "The World is Not Enough" to be performed to celebrate the end of the inspection! The recorder group practised for assembly during playtime because they felt they needed to improve their performance. The pupils are trustworthy and take good care of apparatus, books and materials. They are proud to represent their school in sporting competition and their success is enjoyed and celebrated by everyone in the school.

25. **Attendance**

21. The children who are under five years old come to school happily and on time. Their attendance, although not statutory, is good.
22. Attendance for 1998/99 was 95.2 per cent, which is above the national average and is good. This good level of attendance has been maintained consistently since the last inspection. Most of the absence is caused by illness, but there is a significant amount related to parents taking their children on holiday during term time. This term the school has introduced the practice of recording all holiday absence as unauthorised in an effort to deter parents from taking their children out of school on holiday. Registration procedures are quick and efficient, pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

27. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

27. **Teaching**

23. At the last inspection teaching was judged to be mainly satisfactory with some which was good. The quality of teaching has improved considerably with eight out of every ten lessons being taught at least well, half of which were taught very well and some of which had excellent features.



24. At the last inspection the quality of teaching for children under five in the reception class was judged to be good and this high quality has been maintained. Planning takes account of children's attainment and lessons are planned within the first stages of the National Curriculum. A characteristic of lesson planning throughout the school is the brief sketches of curriculum coverage, resources and targets for the lesson. However, although plans may be brief, teachers have a clear understanding of what they will teach and how it fits within the whole school curriculum. The activities planned capture children's interest and management skills ensure that a calm working atmosphere is maintained. The relationships between the adults and the children are very good and the behaviour management is very effective. Some records of children's achievements are kept although more detailed assessments are not maintained which would track their progress. This hinders better rates of progress as all adults would be better informed of the successes and needs of children. Lessons are particularly successful when challenging demands are made of children. There are examples of this in physical education although the system of pupils moving from one activity to another does not allow children to follow a particular line of interest or enquiry.
25. At Key Stage 1 six out of every ten lessons are taught well and one in ten is taught very well. Teachers' knowledge and subject understanding are generally satisfactory, although that does vary from teacher to teacher and, for example, is good for one of the part-time teachers in Year 2. This teacher taught pupils to use high order reading skills, skimming and scanning, to gain information from texts. Pupils were given a careful explanation about how the particular book was anthropomorphic and that cats cannot really speak. Expectations of pupils are satisfactory. There are exceptions, for example in Year 1, where the teacher used paper to cover some of the illustrations in a book and asked pupils to predict, based on what they had learned from the text. In this class in a mathematics lesson expectations of pupils' behaviour were high although the planning for this lesson did not take sufficient account of pupils' prior attainment. Lesson planning is satisfactory. As in the reception class, planning is light although teachers have a thorough understanding of what is needed to make a successful lesson.
26. Teachers use a satisfactory range of methods and their management of lessons is sound. However, the time from the start of the school day to the beginning of the literacy or numeracy session is not well used. In Year 2 on one day this period included a show and tell session, some word recognition and handwriting. This time was not well used and had no planning to guide the work during the period. The management of pupils is satisfactory in this key stage. In classrooms and around the school, teachers set consistently high standards for behaviour and pupils meet these expectations. At times the very small number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are cared for very effectively. In Year 1, for example, pupils are given direct instructions about where to sit and how to conduct themselves in lessons. However, one of the part-time teachers accepts pupils calling out and not listening as effectively as they might. Resources are used well. Teachers go to great pains to prepare the resources they need so that lessons can start promptly and a reasonable pace can be maintained. However, there are exceptions to this when time is not used as effectively. For instance, in the period immediately after school begins and in some lessons in Year 2 the pace drops and pupils do not learn as quickly as they might. Day-to-day assessment is good. Generally teachers ask searching questions of pupils, for example, in a Year 1 science lesson the teacher checked to see whether pupils' predictions matched their observations. Homework is used satisfactorily to support the work carried out in class. In Year 2 one of the part-time teachers conscientiously used the spelling homework to prepare pupils for an activity on finding words in a difficult piece of writing.
27. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good. In eight of every ten lessons teaching is at least good and in half of those teaching is very good. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is at times excellent. In Years 3, 5 and 6 in particular, the quality of teaching and the commitment to high standards is a key feature of all lessons. In these year groups teaching is never less than good and many lessons have very high quality features in common:
- teachers demonstrate very good levels of subject knowledge and expertise;
  - expectations are very high;
  - planning ensures that pupils use all of their skills across the curriculum;
  - lessons are conducted at a brisk and at times blistering pace; and
  - teachers write very useful comments to pupils in their work which pupils respond to very well.

1. Lesson plans are of very good quality. They clearly show what pupils are expected to learn and understand in each session and the objectives are used to gauge the success of the lesson. Teachers plan their lessons so that pupils are made aware of what they have to do to achieve success. The methods of each lesson are clearly set out and contain a very good range of teaching styles. Introductions are clear and concise and inform pupils of the objectives for the lesson. Whether teachers use direct teaching methods where they tell pupils what they need to learn next or they plan practical sessions in which pupils can apply their new learning, the key characteristic of these plans are the links teachers make to other subjects. Often lessons planned in one subject contain elements of other subjects and pupils are encouraged to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across their curriculum experiences. This allows pupils to see the relevance of their learning and to appreciate how their work in school prepares them for the world outside. In Year 6, for example, pupils were encouraged to recount their own personal discoveries after reading excerpts from classic children's literature. In a Year 3 lesson on script writing, a pupil with special educational needs read his script as part of the plenary. This reinforced the need for pupils to set themselves challenging targets and allowed the class to evaluate and appreciate the standard of work completed by their peers.
2. Very high quality methods were seen in Year 5 when pupils tested light. In this lesson the teacher's subject knowledge and very high expectations established very quickly a suitably challenging atmosphere in which a great deal was demanded of pupils' skills of observation but also of their recording and organisation. This lesson was very well paced throughout and pupils not only completed their investigation but recorded and interpreted their work. This is a key feature of most lessons in this key stage. Expectations of pupils are such that they are required to work very hard and to manage their own learning. This brings very good results and little waste of time. The only exception to this is the first period after school starts in the morning. During this period pupils read for enjoyment and complete activities such as handwriting. However, by the time they reach the end of Year 3 most pupils are competent readers and handwriting is well developed. The most beneficial use of this time was in Year 6 where the teacher reviewed pupils' individual targets and pupils used self-evaluation in an extremely mature manner.
3. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour and their work well. The relationships that exist between teachers and pupils are very productive. Based on mutual respect and teachers valuing the contribution of each pupil, members of the school community get on very well together and enjoy each other's company. There were many examples during the inspection of pupils becoming very excited because their teachers were so enthusiastic and knowledgeable. This ensured that pupils paid attention during the lessons and worked very hard and in no lesson were pupils seen to be working at unsatisfactory rates. In nine out of every ten lessons observed pupils responded well to their teachers and to their tasks and in more than half of these pupils responded very well. Part of the reason that pupils are managed very well is the fact that teachers do not allow pupils to rest on their laurels. The pace of all lessons is at least good and in the vast majority of sessions teachers set pupils tight time limits for the completion of pieces of work. This means that more work can be completed in the lesson, thus encouraging pupils to finish work to a higher standard. Teachers use resources very well to illustrate the points, which they would like pupils to remember and as a focus to aid pupils' level of concentration. Teachers are very adept at using examples of pupils' work to illustrate teaching points.
4. This last technique is based on a very keen assessment of pupils' work. This was shown in all of the classes in this key stage. Of particular note is the dialogue between teacher and pupils in Year 6. The assessment techniques used in this class are of the highest standard and highlight lots of information on a number of levels. The data provides:
  - teachers with the information required to plan the next stage of work;
  - pupils with the next stage of their own development;
  - pupils with a clear insight into the level of their work;
  - an evaluation of the success of teaching methods; and finally but by no means least,
  - the reinforcement of a very high quality relationship between the teacher and the pupil, where the former is seen as a guide and mentor and the latter as a learner, keen to be involved in their own education.
1. This results in the teacher writing comments and pupils thanking the teacher for the advice. At times some disagree with the assessment offering reasons for completing the work in a particular manner but in most cases they agree with the comments and promise to achieve just as well or exceed expectations in the

next piece of work. However, this year group was not alone in having access to very good quality advice. In Years 3 and 5 teachers monitor pupils' work very well and as pupils work they offer support and guidance based on teachers' first hand observations of pupils' class work. Homework is used very well to support school-based learning. Pupils are keen to bring what they have learned at home, whether set as school work, or learned because of a particular interest.

### 37. **The curriculum and assessment**

2. The school offers its pupils a broad and relevant curriculum. Appropriate time is allocated to the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. A strength of the curriculum is the good use of religious education, science, history and geography within English, especially in Key Stage 2. Throughout the key stage, pupils' books include accounts, empathetic writing, poetry and extended writing reflecting the work they do throughout the curriculum. In some books, for example, there are lively accounts of dinner with Henry VIII; in others, high quality poetry reflects the longing for peace. All subjects of the curriculum have an appropriate syllabus and meet statutory requirements where these apply. Although the balance of time spent on each subject is satisfactory overall, the school could make more use of the time allocated to the subjects each day. There is, for example, some time at the beginning of each day that is often spent in low level activities, while less than average time is spent on physical education throughout the school.
3. Children under five enter the reception class with a higher than average level of attainment for their age. The curriculum reflects these levels of attainment and the majority of the work is appropriately planned within the first levels of the National Curriculum. Although the majority of the children have had nursery or play group experience and have good social skills, their day is planned to include access to large playground toys and the co-operative role play that is so important for young children.
4. The school provides sex education through religious education, personal and social education and science. There is an appropriate drug awareness programme. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the recent emphasis on the provision for pupils with high attainment has addressed the issue identified at the time of the last inspection. The pupils in the mixed aged classes have been carefully selected to ensure that they work at levels that are most suited to their abilities. For example, the Year 5 pupils in the Year 6 class relish the challenge of working with Year 6 pupils and respond well to the high expectations of the teacher. There is very good provision for pupils with special needs. Pupils are given achievable targets within the core subjects of English and mathematics enabling them to work alongside their classmates with confidence. Teachers plan work that is challenging but matched to the needs of these pupils. Targets for attitudes to learning, concentration and behaviour are identified and applied within all lessons. The provision for pupils' cultural development has improved and is now good, especially through art, English and history. There is no danger of pupils repeating work because there are different topics taught each year. Although each teacher plans the work for the year to ensure that pupils make appropriate progress throughout the year, teachers rarely plan together and subject co-ordinators do not examine the planning for their subjects throughout the year. This means that there is no overview of the skills taught throughout the school within each subject. The subject content of the curriculum is identified through the overall curriculum planning. But the progress pupils make in the acquisition of, for example, the understanding of chronology within history or the influence of terrain and climate on human settlements in geography is dependent on individual teacher's planning. This does not apply to the teaching of literacy and numeracy where the co-ordinators have monitored the planning and teaching throughout the school.
5. There has been an improvement in the provision of homework since the last inspection. The homework that is set is closely linked to the work in the classroom. There is a high expectation that the work will be completed and in some classes the work is discussed and developed in a class lesson to enable pupils to learn from each other. The range of extra curricular activities including, at the time of the inspection, music and sports clubs, is open to all pupils in Key Stage 2 and offer pupils a chance to extend their learning beyond the classroom.
6. The school has good systems for assessing pupils' attainment. Children's attainment in mathematics, reading and phonics are assessed when they start school and annually throughout the school. Other annual tests are designed to show where pupils have weaknesses in their knowledge and skills. There are class record sheets for English, mathematics and science and pupils' performance in these subjects is measured at the end of modules of work. Samples of work in these subjects are saved to enable teachers to match

pupils' performance against the average levels for the age of the pupils. From the results of these assessments, teachers set targets for future work, both for individual pupils and for cohorts. The school is beginning to track the progress of groups of pupils in the core subjects throughout the school, and identify differences in gender and between different cohorts. Teachers are good at setting tasks for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills through investigation and work in other subjects. In English, for example, they link the prefixes and suffixes they have learnt to their roots in Ancient Greek, in mathematics they select the best method to use to solve problems and in science they use their knowledge to test hypotheses. In this way, pupils' knowledge and understanding is regularly assessed. Pupils measure their own progress against their personal targets.

7. Teachers use the result of their assessments to amend their planning. They are beginning to analyse the results of the national tests and voluntary tests to examine the curriculum and amend it when appropriate. Pupils with higher or lower than average levels of attainment are swiftly identified and appropriate provision is made to accommodate them. The school successfully challenges pupils with high attainment, especially in Key Stage 2. There is extra English support for pupils in Key Stage 2 and the headteacher provides additional support for some lessons. As the school is becoming more skilled in using the results of their assessments, it is identifying more ways to match the work closely to individual needs. The school development plan includes the possibility of setting pupils by ability for English and mathematics.

#### 43. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

8. The provision the school makes for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. The school is a civilised community where the care for the individual is shown by the value adults place on the personal and academic contributions all children bring to the school. At the last inspection this area of the school's work was judged to be of good quality. This high level has been improved upon and the inspection team supports parents' views that pupils' attitudes and values are promoted extremely well.
9. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well. Planned experiences in English, particularly when writing poetry, science and art help to promote a sense of awe and wonder in pupils. For example, there are many occasions taken during the day for prayer. Each pupil is encouraged to reflect upon the welfare of others and to pray for those people that they know to be needy in one way or another. This sharing of concerns and thanks for the natural world helps pupils to reflect upon their experiences and the results of their work. Assemblies contain stories and anecdotes and raise issues for pupils to consider as well as more opportunities for pupils to reflect and pray. Displays play an extremely important part in the provision for spiritual development. From the very high quality of art work to the religious icons used to focus prayerful attention, they are of very high quality and serve a number of functions. They focus pupils' attention on the range of activities taking place in the school as well as highlight the wonders of the natural and man made world.
10. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. From the time pupils join the school they are encouraged to be responsible for their own actions. Teachers have very high expectations that their pupils will behave well. Truthfulness and honesty are accepted as the norm. As a result of this, pupils work without direct teacher supervision responsibly and with a great sense of application. They are given opportunities to consider their own actions and are expected to respond in a manner which is based on the guidelines and example set out by staff members. They are given opportunities to consider whether their own and other people's actions are right and wrong and they are encouraged to understand the differences between these moral viewpoints. Moral and social issues are discussed in classrooms where the teachers skilfully guide the pupils to show that their academic work has an impact on their personal development. International and national news items which have moral aspects are discussed as part of the curriculum. For example, when pupils in Year 6 are asked to write a piece of persuasive writing, pupils independently chose to explore moral and social issues in a very mature, balanced and responsible manner. The school is a civilised place where pupils acquire moral convictions based on the assumption that everyone in the school is a full and valued member of the school community.
11. The provision for pupils' social development is also very good. As they grow older the expectations of

pupils' behaviour increase. Pupils are expected to develop a good understanding of what it is to live as an individual in a society in which each person has rights and responsibilities. Pupils are given many opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups and these support the development of a mature approach to their work and their community. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own classrooms and workspaces. At the end of each lesson they are expected to clear away their own resources and to leave their rooms ready for the next lesson. All pupils work co-operatively in lessons. There is an expectation that pupils will group themselves in the most effective way and that they will delegate responsibilities within the groups. The wide range of educational and residential visits and clubs all provide pupils with the opportunity to extend their social skills in different situations. Much of the work planned in English, mathematics, science and art is designed to encourage independent thinking and self-responsibility.

12. The provision for cultural development is good and has improved since the last inspection when it was considered to be an key issue for the school to address. Within the music and art curriculum, pupils study the work of artists, musicians and composers. The pupils are introduced to a good range of literature and poetry. Their own work is appreciated and valued and teachers have very high expectations of pupils' ability to express themselves in a variety of ways. The school has provided a good range of resources, artefacts and cultural activities which support pupils' development in this aspect of their work. Music is played during assemblies and art plays an important part in the displays and decoration of the school. The school is well decorated with artefacts, sculptures and artwork from western and other cultures. The care that has been taken to make the school, the borders and the layout of the school playground aesthetically attractive and welcoming is a significant factor in the development of pupils' cultural values. The school invites visitors and organises educational visits to support pupils' cultural development. Pupils are taught about other cultures through their history and geography topics and experience the diversity of cultures and faiths within the syllabus for religious education. Pupils from different countries are fully integrated into the life of the school, and the teachers encourage pupils to learn from each other.

#### 48. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

13. The school makes very good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils and this has a very positive effect on their attainment and the progress they make during their time in school. It represents an improvement since the last inspection, specifically in the now consistent tracking of pupils' progress through the school and the very good support provided for higher attaining pupils.
14. The children who are under five enjoy their time in school and are well cared for. There are good systems for monitoring the academic progress and personal development of the children and this effectively identifies their individual strengths and weaknesses at an early stage. The children quickly learn the routines of the classroom and what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour. There are good opportunities at the beginning and end of the day for parents to talk informally to staff and this ensures that any minor concerns are addressed quickly.
15. At both key stages, there are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress based on recorded information, as well as the class teachers' in-depth knowledge of each pupil. This information is used very effectively to target individual weaknesses and provide focused support. Pupils' involvement in setting targets for themselves provides an element of self-evaluation, which results in strong levels of self-motivation to work towards the targets. Class teachers note aspects of pupils' personal development. This builds up into a useful bank of information for each individual, which is used to provide an extra level of personal support and advice as and when necessary. For example, the school has recognised that the progress of some pupils who suffer from asthma can be impeded by absence from school or tiredness due to medication or lack of sleep. An Asthma Club has been set up to endeavour to address these issues and to boost the self-esteem of those pupils who are affected. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and their specific needs supported well. This ensures that they make consistently very good progress as they move through the school. Any pupil who persistently misbehaves is referred to the headteacher and a strategy devised to monitor and remedy the situation in consultation with parents. Class teachers keep the attendance statistics up-to-date and this would effectively identify any drop in attendance at an early stage. Overall monitoring is carried out weekly by the school secretary and certificates for good attendance are awarded.

16. The effectiveness of the measures to promote discipline and good behaviour is evident in the very good behaviour of pupils both in the school and in the playground. Staff encourage good behaviour by the effective and consistent use of praise and pupils clearly understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Discipline is kind, firm and fair and both pupils and parents confirm that the school handles any instances of bullying which occur quickly, fairly and consistently. Talks with pupils indicates that they understand the need to talk to an adult if they feel concerned about bullying and the very good relationships in the school support this.
17. The school's provision for promoting the health, safety and well being of pupils is good overall. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has received appropriate training. The school follows recognised guidelines and procedures and staff awareness of this aspect of pupils' welfare are good. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and appropriate records kept. Provision for first aid is very good and supervision during the mid-day break is good. Pupils receive appropriate sex, health and drugs education, which equips them with the basic life skills they need before moving to secondary education. Liaison procedures with the receiving secondary schools are good and ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of education. Fire drills are carried out once a term and evacuation is quick and efficient. Records are kept and equipment checked. Fire exits are clearly marked, although only the exit from the hall has a push bar mechanism. The school is a clean and warm environment in which the pupils are well cared for.

### 53. **Partnership with parents and the community**

18. The school's relationship with parents is very good. There is a strong commitment from both parents and staff to work together for the benefit of the children. There are many mutually beneficial links with the local community, which contribute effectively to pupils' attainment, progress and personal development. This situation has been maintained well since the last inspection and views expressed by the majority of parents prior to the inspection, indicate a high level of support for, and approval of, the school.
19. The quality of information provided for parents about the school is good. The prospectus gives a comprehensive and practical introduction to the school and the annual governors' report for parents is a useful and interesting account of the school's achievements and activities. There are two opportunities for parents to attend formal consultations about their children's progress during the year and the headteacher and staff are always available to respond to requests for more information or to address any concerns. The annual reports give parents good information about what their children have learnt during the year. They identify specific weak areas and set targets for improvement. However, apart from the reports for Years 2 and 6, there is no clear indication of the level of attainment achieved. Each term parents receive a brief outline of what their children will be learning during the coming weeks, and the school has organised presentations on the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Every term, with the valued help of a former parent, the school publishes an excellent newsletter which is distributed to all parents as well as to the local community. This brings parents up-to-date with activities and provides an opportunity for the children to display their literary skills. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed about their progress and are fully involved in the review process. The school receives good support from specialist external agencies.
20. The involvement of parents in the life of the school and the learning of their children is very good. They were fully involved in preparing the home-school contract and play a valuable role in helping their children at home. The curriculum information provided each term encourages this involvement. Parents regularly read with their children at home and the parent helpers who come into school every week spend their time in teacher directed activity. This has a significant impact on pupils' early acquisition of literacy skills. Parents, particularly of Key Stage 2 children, help with homework and the majority are happy with the amount of homework the children are expected to do. There are many volunteers who help with visits, and the invaluable assistance of parents supervising children when walking to the swimming pool ensures their safety. The parents' association organises a range of social and fund raising activities which are well supported. The funds raised are currently being used to carpet the classrooms and to supplement resources.
21. The school has established very strong links with the local community. The church plays a integral role in the life of the school. The children regularly visit and participate in church activities. The priest often visits the school and is well known to the children. The ceramic tiles produced by the children with the

help of a local company are tangible evidence of the support the school receives from the local community. The activities and achievements of the children are regularly reported in the local press. They take part in competitive sport against other schools as well as joint projects such as the combined carol service. At Christmas time the children entertain the elderly community and they fill a shoe box with toys to be sent to less fortunate children in eastern Europe. They visit the local museum and other amenities within the immediate Stamford area as well as further afield in support of their learning. All these activities enrich the children's experience of school and make a positive contribution to their personal development.

## 57. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### 57. Leadership and management

22. Leadership and management are generally good and have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. The headteacher, key stage managers, curriculum co-ordinators and governors provide the school with clear educational direction. The school's mission statement and aims clearly chart the school's focus and managers and the governing body work hard to match the school's performance to these targets. The headteacher shows good leadership skills; the governing body attests to his steadfast handling of the many issues that the school faces and he manages the school with his two senior management team members in a straightforward yet ambitious way. He has overseen the actions that have addressed the issues highlighted in the last inspection in an effective manner. He focuses the school's work on raising standards and providing pupils with a learning atmosphere in which each child is well known, valued and challenged.
23. Support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development is good and this aspect of the school's work has improved significantly since the last inspection. The headteacher and the curriculum co-ordinators review standards, teaching and the curriculum well. The headteacher knows the school, the skills and attributes of pupils and teachers very well. He visits classes and, as a large proportion of his time is taken up in teaching and supporting other teachers, this develops a knowledge of the curriculum, pupils' capabilities and where improvements need to be made. Staff members regularly check on pupils' books to ensure that progress is being made. The curriculum is matched against the school's policies and schemes and reference made to national initiatives. Generally the school's work is kept under review and the curriculum and teaching methods altered if the analysis of results shows a need. The work of the governors in monitoring the work of the school is generally satisfactory. Links between governors and staff have been established in a number of areas and governors receive good quality information about the attainment of pupils, they have yet to regularise the systems they use to check on the work of the school. The governing body gives a good and reasoned account for the work of the school. Governors clearly understand the nature of the school's intake and how teachers work to improve skills and attainment. The committee structure and the individual visits made by governors provide effective tools for gathering information. Governors as a group are learning to work in close partnership with the headteacher and add an effective strategic sounding board to complement the headteacher's energetic day-to-day management. The governing body meets its statutory obligations.
24. The school development plan is a satisfactory management device. It charts the school's priorities in a clear and unambiguous manner. The targets have adequate financial details and end dates by which objectives are to be achieved. However, the plan lacks some details on how it will be monitored and its success judged. Success criteria are included but they often simply reiterate the target rather than detail the improvements that will be brought about as a result of reaching the target. There is little indication as to the steps involved in completing the target or performance details in order to be able to gauge the effectiveness of the measures taken to meet the priorities.
25. The provision for special educational needs is managed effectively. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and learning support assistants work extremely well to meet these needs. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are well met. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very effectively across the school to maintain good records and to ensure that the work of the staff is well supervised. Equal opportunities are well managed in the

school; the principles of equality of provision and resources are shown in all of the school's work.

26. The aims of the school have been recently reviewed and are a very good platform for guiding the school. The aims are relevant and are very well met in all classes and as a whole community. Learning is considered to be something special and, as a continuing process, pupils want to come to school to learn. The school is a civilised place where the academic and the social work seamlessly together to provide pupils with a learning atmosphere which is characterised by challenging work for all and where each child is valued for their contribution to the school's community. The school's ethos for learning is very good.
27. Most aspects of the school's work have improved since the last inspection. Attainment is improving and the measures taken to increase the rate of progress are effective. The staff intend further initiatives to accelerate progress. Pupils' personal development has improved; thought satisfactory to good at the last inspection it is now very good overall and pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. The quality of education, including teaching, was judged to be satisfactory overall and is now good with very good features, particularly at Key Stage 2. Of the key issues identified in the last inspection:
- more able pupils are now set challenging work which stretches them and makes consistently progressive demands;
  - the steps taken to improve the quality of teaching of the younger pupils have been effective to some extent; teaching in this part of the school is good overall, although there are inconsistencies between teachers;
  - the procedures for controlling and monitoring the spending on educational resources are now very good; the procedures and the steps the governing body have taken have proved very effective;
  - resource provision and quality are now good;
  - the school development plan still maintains a large number of initiatives but the managers and governing body are now using a more strategic viewpoint to plan the school's work; and
  - the provision for pupils' cultural development is now good, an improvement from the less than satisfactory provision seen in the last inspection.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and the school's capacity to improve is good.

- **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

1. The teaching staff are well qualified and appropriately experienced to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The learning support assistants have significant strengths and experience and provide good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The caretaker, cleaning, lunchtime and administrative staff are all highly committed and make a significant contribution to the smooth running, clean and well-ordered environment. Staffing ratios are similar to those seen nationally.
2. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are very good. Training to broaden the skills of staff is appropriately linked to the school development plan. Staff are committed to improving standards and this is evident in the strong commitment to the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the National Grid for Learning. Learning support staff work closely with teachers to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum. There are good appraisal arrangements in place which help to support staff members in their training and professional development.
3. Accommodation is good. The school is situated on a pleasant, spacious site. The grounds include hard and grassed areas and have been developed into attractive areas for play and study. Particular features include seating areas surrounded by gardens that are highly valued by the school community. Classroom accommodation is good and is well managed. The school makes effective use of areas such as the well-equipped library and design and technology room to enhance learning.
4. The quality of work displayed throughout the school is very good. It is used effectively both to stimulate the pupils' interest and to celebrate work.
5. Resources for learning are good and support the effective delivery of the curriculum. There is a good range, quality and quantity of resources, equipment, books and computers to support teaching and learning



throughout the school.

**68. The efficiency of the school**

6. Financial planning is of good quality. There is a committed governing body that is closely involved with the work of the school. The finance and personnel committees, together with the senior management team, provide coherent financial planning to support educational developments. These developments are closely linked to a comprehensive school development plan that is financed in a systematic manner. A range of budget proposals is considered along with plans for whole school and curriculum development. Monitoring spending and the impact of decisions are systematic.
7. School administration is of very good quality. Its systems and procedures ensure the school operates smoothly. The school's administrator provides regular financial reports for the headteacher and governors. Administrative duties are separated sufficiently to ensure financial probity. Issues raised in the most recent audit report are being addressed.
8. Staff and resources are efficiently deployed. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported and the funds devolved to the school for this purpose are utilised effectively. The resources of the school are good, well managed and available in sufficient quality and quantity to support teaching and learning. The accommodation is well maintained and the space available is effectively used.
9. Taking into account that:
  - children enter the school attaining levels above those found nationally;
  - by the age of eleven attainment in English is well above average, and in mathematics and science is above average;
  - progress is good throughout the school;
  - the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall;
  - the quality of education generally is good and teaching is very good, and
  - the income per pupil is in line with the national average,

the school provides good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

1. Baseline assessment shows that the attainment of children on entry to the school is above average. Children enter the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. The majority have had some nursery or playgroup experience. The majority are confident and articulate and settle down quickly to the rigours of the school day. At the time of the inspection only six children were already five. Most of the children have achieved the Desirable Outcomes for Learning for five-year-olds and are ready for the next stage in their education. The majority of the work is planned within the first levels of the National Curriculum. Children maintain their good levels of attainment throughout their year in the reception class, make sound progress and start Year 1 at higher than average levels.
2. The children's personal development is good. They learn to share equipment, play and work co-operatively together and to work independently. They take turns, care for one another and usually discuss their work amicably. They are very polite. For example, in one lesson where children were doing letter alphabet puzzles, one boy asked another to help him very courteously. He was given instant help. They clear away their own work and help each other to pack away. They move around the school sensibly and quietly. They concentrate on their work and sustain high levels of concentration in, for example, their physical education lessons, taking care over their movement and striving to improve. They use their initiative to find different ways of balancing. In an art lesson they showed a clear understanding of the routines for changing activities and responded quickly. In an English lesson, apart from a minor dispute about sharing crayons, pupils demonstrated independence and responsibility.
3. Children have good linguistic and literacy skills. All hold pencils correctly and make a good attempt at forming letters. Over half the class is beginning to write independently, many writing simple sentences. Others copy adults' writing accurately and neatly. Very few children do not recognise the initial letter of words. They find other words with the same first letter, and the majority find rhyming words, real and imaginary. Almost all children use complete sentences when speaking and many are extending their sentences with adjectives and adverbs. They have a good technical vocabulary. For example, children use the words 'heavier', 'lighter' and 'balance' when describing weight, and mouse and cursor when using computers. They listen to stories and poems very attentively and readily contribute to class discussions.
4. All children handle books carefully and describe with obvious enjoyment the story told by the illustrations. Many children read simple words and some are beginning to read sentences with expression and meaning. Some use letter sounds to read words and few cannot make an educated guess at an unknown word by using picture or contextual prompts. All children, regardless of prior attainment levels, retell stories and some predict the outcomes. Those who cannot guess the outcome readily describe what they would like to happen!
5. Children count accurately to at least ten. Many add one or two more to numbers within ten. At least half the class counts in sequence using numbers beyond twenty. They use comparative language accurately and naturally, using 'longer' and 'shorter', 'heavier' and 'lighter', 'above' and 'below' and 'before' and 'after'. Numerals are written with reasonable accuracy although some are reversed. Children name simple shapes and continue patterns. The teacher and classroom support assistants ensure that children explain how they work out their answers, establishing good habits of selecting methods and checking results.
6. Children are given plenty of opportunities to extend their creative skills. They paint, print and use malleable materials like clay and salt dough. They make collages and weave yarn and cloth. They design wallpaper for the "nursery" and build prams from construction toys. Children sing and mime simple songs and play together using role-play in, for example, the "baby clinic". The enclosed outside play area and large toys encourage more, less structured role-play.
7. The children develop their physical skills well. In the physical education lessons they demonstrate high levels of balance, application to high standards and a willingness to experiment and try different approaches. They are careful and make good use of space. All children manipulate small equipment skilfully. They cut out carefully and stick objects together without too much mess. They thread laces, draw detailed pictures and colour them carefully. Their computer keyboard skills are improving and many type

their names accurately. Some children manipulate the small pieces of jigsaws with more confidence and skill than the adult talking to them!

8. Children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world about them. During the inspection week they bathed a real baby and are articulate about the needs of young children and other young animals. They have studied the main events in their own lives and have made family trees with the aid of family photographs. Children discuss the weather daily and the teacher takes care to discuss issues arising from stories and assemblies.
9. Children with special needs are identified early through initial assessment when they start school. Children on the special needs register receive very good support from the teacher and support assistants, enabling them to make very good progress and to gain a sense of achievement and pride in what they do.
10. The quality of teaching for children under five in the reception class is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Lessons are carefully planned, the majority within the first levels of the National Curriculum, to meet the needs of all the children in the class. The curriculum is adjusted from year to year as the attainment of the intake varies. Although the written planning does not always reflect what the teacher wants the children to learn, she has a clear vision of the targets for each lesson and each group of pupils. The activities and lessons are interesting and there is an atmosphere is calm and relaxed. Children feel secure and are in a good learning environment. The school day is well organised, usually with a rota system to ensure that children have a range of experiences. The relationships between the adults and the children are very good and the behaviour management is very effective. The teacher keeps careful records of the work the children have done and what they have achieved. These are usually in the form of tick sheets. Assessment arrangements generally are good although daily notes of children's attainment are not as thorough. The pattern of the day is secure and calm and children work steadily. The lessons are very good when children are expected to perform to high levels, for example, in physical education when children are responsible for developing their own methods. The normal, highly structured rota of activities in the school day does not always allow the children to follow their own line of enquiry or to become deeply involved in an aspect of their learning. This precludes the sound progress from becoming good.

## 82. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### 82. **English**

11. National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds in 1999 show well above average standards in English when compared to all schools in the country. When compared to similar school standards are average. This shows a rise in attainment since 1998 when average and well below average standards respectively were achieved. With the increase in attainment in 1999 the school is now back on the same slow but steady rising trend in attainment shown in 1996 and 1997. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels of the assessments improved in 1999 compared to 1998, the balance is below the average that similar schools achieve. In the 1999 tests for seven-year-olds pupils attained very high standards when compared with all schools and well above average when compared to similar schools.
12. Overall, pupils make good progress in all aspects of English and by the time they are eleven, pupils reach standards that are well above the national average for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Progress is better in Key Stage 2 where it is good, and is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. From the time they enter the school, pupils develop an enthusiasm for literacy, even those who are experiencing some difficulties. The school's effective strategy for literacy is making a significant contribution to meeting its challenging targets. The present standards are a significant improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection.
13. Speaking and listening skills are very good throughout the school and pupils make good progress. There are many articulate individuals who can communicate complex ideas with an impressive range of vocabulary. Even less confident children express themselves clearly, thanks to the climate of trust and support. In Year 3 a lower attaining pupil was asked to read a play script written from the story of the Three Little Pigs. In the last few minutes of the lesson the teacher encouraged the child to describe his

work to the class and read his script taking four characters' voices. This was exceptionally well handled and promoted high standards of speaking skills in the pupil concerned and very high quality listening skills in the other pupils in the class. Teachers move seamlessly from academic discussion about the merits of classical literature to their own personal discoveries, as in a Year 6 lesson. In this example, pupils talked openly and with great conviction about their beliefs and the insights they have to their own personalities. Pupils listen attentively and responsively to adults and to one another. Through well-directed literacy hour activities and many opportunities provided in other subjects, they are developing a confident technical vocabulary that enables them to talk in detail about language and literature. They share a growing sense of empathy with writers and literature generally. Their very high quality listening skills help pupils maintain excellent working routines. In assemblies, in lessons and when working together, pupils demonstrate their listening capabilities.

14. By the age of eleven, pupils read fluently, showing understanding and enjoyment, and correcting their mistakes. Pupils enter the school with above average pre-reading skills and these skills are increased so that pupils throughout the school show well above average reading skills. They acquire a very good foundation for independent reading by building up a bank of key words and developing a range of strategies to decipher unfamiliar words. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn how to build words by sounding out the combinations of letters they know. Shared sessions during the literacy hour are effective in sharpening their awareness of sounds, and drawing their attention to details in the texts and illustrations. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 learn to read expressively, altering their voice when they read dialogue to suit different characters, for example, and paying attention to pauses indicated by the punctuation. As they discuss characters and what they might be feeling, pupils show a high level of involvement in the story. In Year 1 the teacher hid the characters with patches of paper and pupils predicted what would happen; even at this early age pupils begin to develop a key characteristic that is evident throughout the school, their keen empathy with characters. This grows as pupils move from year to year until, as Year 6 pupils, they discuss with great maturity a character's reasoning and preferences for action. Pupils are quick to notice similarities with other stories they know, or differences in books by the same author. By Year 3 they have developed a very good grasp of narrative structure, and the different settings in stories. Some are sophisticated readers, tackling classics with enthusiasm. Pupils are familiar with a particularly wide range of poetry, identifying and comparing rhyme patterns and the poet's intentions. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to take books home and to read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction.
15. Pupils make good progress in writing for a range of purposes and audiences. There are a number of notable features of writing in the school. Pupils use their reading experiences to help them in writing both fiction and non-fiction of their own. From an early age they are prepared to attempt to write independently, and as they develop fluency, they work hard to revise and improve their drafts. Handwriting and spelling skills are above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils develop fluent well-presented styles. Pupils are aware of visual patterns as well as using their knowledge of letter sounds to spell unfamiliar words. They practise hard to improve their spelling and handwriting. By the time they leave school pupils have developed regular, legible joined handwriting which they can use to produce work at speed.
16. Writing standards are particularly high in Key Stage 2. Pupils use their knowledge of punctuation, sentence structure and poetic devices to achieve the effect they want, whether in shared writing or completing persuasive writing about an issue of their own choosing. Year 6 wrote about whether people under 18 should be allowed to drive and what would be the impact of under-18s being allowed to vote. These pieces were well argued, mature and in many instances very persuasive. Almost all of the pieces were concerned, in some way, with people being afforded equal opportunities. They produce many types of competent non-fiction writing as part of history, work in other subjects, such as making notes and lists, writing articles or explaining scientific processes. A small group of pupils in each year group excel at poetic writing. The resulting poems are at times lyrical whilst cleverly using rhyming schemes to enhance their work. Pupils bring their reading to bear and produce work that is touching and exacting. This very high quality piece of writing is taken from Year 4 for example:

Green is the meadow,  
Fresh and jewelled,  
Grassy and soft,  
Like dew, freshly cooled.

17. Pupils in all four year groups know they are authors and poets. They are encouraged to consider themselves to be writers with a real purpose behind their work that critical audiences of their peers will review. Pupils are asked by their teachers to evaluate the work of their friends with a view to developing their powers of criticism and thus ensure that their own work is drafted with care and appropriate revisions. In English lessons there is a great enthusiasm and from their earliest days in school, pupils demonstrate very high quality working skills. Pupils get to work immediately their tasks are set and all pupils work very hard indeed. It is not unusual for pupils in Year 6 to write at length, high quality work in the 20 minutes that is made available to them.
18. The quality of teaching, particularly in the literacy hour, makes a significant contribution to the high standards in English. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the national literacy strategy framework and use it to plan precise learning objectives. Planning is effective, if not extensively written-up, and literacy hours have coherence over the week through using shared reading to support pupils' writing. Group activities are very well matched to pupils' level of understanding and planned to reinforce points made in the whole class session. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, based on accurate assessment of their work. They motivate and support children effectively by creating a purposeful classroom climate. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. Tasks are well planned to challenge high attainers, particularly in Years 3, 5 and 6. Calm, firm management and precise instructions ensure that all pupils are absolutely clear about what they are meant to do and how long they have got to complete a task. Teachers generally structure lessons well, maintaining a brisk pace and gathering the threads together effectively in a plenary session. They offer very valuable feedback to pupils about their strengths and weaknesses, identifying any errors precisely but constructively, and encouraging pupils to evaluate their own progress. Of particular note are the dialogues constructed between the Year 6 teacher and pupils. Often the teacher will comment on a piece of work and ask questions of the pupil to which replies are written, or pupils thank the teacher for the comments and tell of how pleased they are about their own work. Helped by this sort of relationship, pupils' attitudes to their work are consistently very good. They take much care over presentation, are highly motivated, and show pride in their own and others' efforts, often spontaneously applauding others' work.
19. The subject is well co-ordinated. Systems for monitoring progress in reading are thorough and informative, including an assessment sheet for group reading during the literacy hour. A thorough analysis of test results helps to keep the subject under review. English and literacy skills are correctly highlighted as having a vital role in pupils' education and the school places a heavy emphasis on pupils acquiring these skills.

91. **Mathematics**

20. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment was above the national average in 1999 and in line with that of pupils from similar backgrounds. This is an improvement on the results of the year before when pupils' attainment was similar to that of other pupils nationally and below that of pupils in similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils in 1998 achieved results that were in line with national averages and well below those of pupils in similar schools. In 1999 pupils achieved results that were above the national average and in line with similar schools. This rise in attainment reflects the progress made since the last inspection. The present Year 6 pupils have above average attainment in all aspects of mathematics and their attainment in the use and applications of mathematics and some aspects of number is well above average. The majority of the pupils in the present Year 2 are working at levels that are above average for their age. The attainment in the end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1999 and 1998 is consistent with the present Year 3 and Year 4 pupils and reflects the differences between the different cohorts of pupils from year to year. The present Year 6 pupils achieved above average levels of attainment in their national tests at the end of Key Stage 1.
21. When children start school in the reception class they already have a good knowledge of mathematics. In Year 1, most are able to count to 10 and match the numbers to sets of objects. They use the symbols +, - and = accurately and are beginning to add and subtract within 10. They use and explain patterns in number and shape, counting in twos and fives. They make satisfactory progress throughout their first year in school and maintain their good numeracy skills. This progress continues in Year 2. Many add and subtract numbers within 20 and put numbers up to 100 in order. Some understand place value and are able to say,

for example, which number indicates the number of tens in a two-digit number. They count on and back in fives and twos and are beginning to understand the principles of multiplication. They name common flat shapes like circles and triangles and find ways to measure length. Many explain the methods they use to calculate confidently and clearly. When they have the opportunity they apply their learning to solve number problems. For example, pupils in one lesson recorded 3 sets of 4 as  $4+4+4$  and  $3 \times 4$  without prompting, having learnt how to record 2 sets of 5. In some lessons there is a lack of urgency and pace which prevents the pupils from making the good progress of which they are capable.

22. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress, especially in the use and applications of mathematics, aspects of number and probability. In Year 3 pupils find the product of, for example  $4 \times 3$ . They find factors of 18. Almost all understand that even numbers are all multiples of 2. The majority has a good understanding of place value and solves  $\pounds 200 \times 8$  when solving real life situations like costing the trip to the Millennium Dome. Higher attaining pupils round up and down to the nearest round number with ease and use this process to solve mental calculations. In Year 4 pupils add and subtract hundreds, tens and units and understand place value. They have a good mental recall of simple multiplication tables and the majority define a fraction correctly. Most understand the equivalence of fractions and know that  $\frac{3}{4}$  is the same as  $\frac{6}{8}$ . Lower attaining pupils understand the relationship between halves and quarters of apples.
23. Pupils maintain good rates of progress in Years 5 and 6. They have secure strategies for solving mental arithmetic problems and use them with alacrity. They check their answers using inverse operations. The pace in lessons is rapid, pupils are totally committed to the task and their teachers have very high expectations of their pupils' abilities. Pupils are consistently challenged at levels that stretch all abilities, and careful questions to individual pupils enable each to make the best possible progress. At the end of these lessons pupils measure their progress against the learning objectives identified at the beginning of the lesson. Most pupils in Year 6 and one or two in Year 5 are already working at levels above the national average for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. They achieve this because they are systematically encouraged to explain, apply and test their work and set their own personal targets for improvement. All aspects of the mathematics curriculum are tackled with the same commitment. Pupils use information technology to record data in a variety of ways and extract information from their database. This is linked to their work in other subjects, as is the majority of the work on area and shape and probability. Pupils compare population and habitat, record positions of details on ordnance survey maps, make scale drawings, find the median, range, mode and average of the data they record and investigate number patterns for the sheer joy of doing so!
24. Throughout the school pupils with special needs make good progress. They are set work that is challenging but achievable. They receive good support from non-teaching assistants and the headteacher. The teachers brief the additional adults carefully and pupils with special needs are an integral part of the class lesson. Mathematical targets are included in the individual education plans and pupils are encouraged to measure their progress against these targets.
25. Pupils behave very well in their mathematics lessons. Younger pupils listen attentively, answer questions eagerly and work with commitment. All pupils try their best and most take a pride in their work. All enjoy the mental arithmetic and oral sessions at the beginning of each lesson, listen carefully to each other and respect each other's points of view. They are very helpful. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils holding bags of sweets ensured that their classmates could see how many were in each bag. This was on their own initiative, and enabled pupils to count how many sweets there were in five bags of five. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good throughout the school. In the majority of classes in Key Stage 2 mathematical learning appears to be a shared process. Pupils learn from each other, from their teachers and through their own initiative. Most complete their homework conscientiously and present it well. Many of the oldest pupils delight in working on challenging tasks. If they fail to find solutions they try different strategies. Less confident pupils work with commitment and perseverance. Teachers ensure that their successes are celebrated as much as those of high attaining pupils.
26. There was no unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics observed during the inspection. Over three quarters of the teaching was at least good and a third was very good. This is an improvement on the teaching at the time of the last inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching with no lessons being deemed very good. There is still a difference in the quality of teaching between the key stages, and all the very good teaching is in Key Stage 2. The majority of the teachers in Key Stage 2 have high expectations of their

pupils' abilities and the issue of lack of challenge identified in the last report has been fully addressed in the older classes. All teachers know the subject and their pupils very well; work is carefully matched to meet the needs of the different abilities in the class. Teachers follow the pattern of the recommended numeracy strategy but allow some flexibility to meet immediate needs. They ensure that mathematics is promoted throughout the curriculum and some of the themes of mathematics lessons are directly related to other subjects. For example, pupils use data gathered on field trips to learn how to display and retrieve information. Lessons are well planned. Although detailed planning is not always written down, teachers know exactly what they want the pupils to achieve. The lessons are very well organised in Key Stage 2 when there is an emphasis on pupils' independent learning and the applications of strategies to solve problems. In these lessons there is a rapid pace and very good relationships between teacher and pupils. Careful questioning techniques enable teachers to assess understanding and lead their pupils on to find solutions. Pupils are given the objectives for the lesson and evaluate their performance at the end. In the older classes, pupil management is effortless and teachers give the impression of shared learning. In one or two of the lessons in Key Stage 1, the pace of the lessons is more pedestrian, and pupils make only steady progress.

27. Throughout the school teachers make careful assessments of their pupils' work. In the Key Stage 2 classes there is some very good informative marking. The oldest pupils maintain a working dialogue with their teacher. Written comments from both teacher and pupil, expressing opinions and responses about the work enable both to understand what action to take next. This is high quality assessment. In all lessons teachers use the result of their assessment to amend the plans for the next lesson to meet the needs of the class and individuals. Pupils sit standardised tests to assess their attainment and teachers are beginning to track progress from year to year. Pupils are set targets and the school sets targets for attainment at the end of each key stage. The effectiveness of the numeracy project is identified for review in the school development plan and the mathematics' co-ordinator has monitored the teaching and planning of the subject. The provision, standards and teaching of mathematics have all improved since the last inspection.

## 99. **Science**

28. National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds in 1999 show average standards in science when compared to all schools in the country. When compared to similar school standards are well below average. This shows that levels of attainment have been maintained since 1998 when average and well below average standards respectively were achieved. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels of the assessments improved in 1999 compared to 1998, the balance is below the average that similar schools achieve. In the 1999 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, pupils attained average standards when compared with all schools.
29. The inspection team found that attainment generally has improved and aspects of investigative and experimental science have improved greatly. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is above average and exceeds national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is average and in line with national expectations.
30. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand that humans have senses that enable them to be aware of the world around them. They practise their investigational skills, can describe simple features and communicate their findings. They are able to record their observations by drawing and labelling, recognising that this is important when carrying out scientific investigations. For example, in Year 1 pupils investigated which of their classmates could roll their tongue. Satisfactory progress was made in this lesson as pupil observed the results of their investigation and recorded their data.
31. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop an understanding of life processes and living things. For example, in Year 3, pupils investigate the effect of exercise and rest on pulse rate and the need for careful, controlled and accurate measuring. In Year 4, pupils investigate materials and their properties, by grouping and classifying those that make good thermal insulators. In Year 5, pupils work on physical processes gaining an understanding that light travels in straight lines and the effects of light on transparent, translucent and opaque materials. In Year 6, pupils understand the life cycle of fruiting plants. They know that all living organisms have life cycles, which may differ from species to species. They describe how flowers are the reproductive organs of some plants and how pollination takes place. Pupils understand that matter can exist in a number of states, such as solids, liquids and gasses and that a material can take many different

forms. They know that some materials have specific properties that are used to protect us, for example how the insulating properties of plastic are used to shield us from hot metal when used in handles. They are aware of materials that can be changed from one form to another and which of these changes are reversible and which are irreversible.

32. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Generally, previous knowledge and understanding are built upon but occasionally further progress is restricted by lack of challenge in questioning and in the demands of the tasks presented to the pupils. However, in a lesson in Year 1 good questioning skills enabled the teacher to make an accurate assessment of pupils' learning. In Key Stage 2, progress is good and by Year 5 it is very good; for example, in the recording of observations and measurements in light experiments. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and make very good progress.
33. Pupils' attitudes to science are excellent overall. They are eager to contribute to lessons, are attentive and respect each other's contributions. They work purposefully and concentrate on the tasks set. Application to tasks, perseverance, initiative and responsibility for the outcomes are all of extremely high quality. Exercise books of pupils in Year 6 show a great deal of pride taken in the presentation of work demonstrating concern for the layout and appearance.
34. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. Lessons are well planned and have clear learning objectives. Teachers manage pupils well and maintain good relationships in lessons. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have a secure knowledge, set high expectations and use skilful questioning to clarify thinking. In investigative work, pupils are encouraged to make predictions and draw conclusions from observed results. In Year 6, the quality of the marking of work is very good, helping pupils to improve and setting particularly high expectations for all pupils.
35. Teachers are supported by a comprehensive scheme of work that is of good quality and in which health and safety issues are clearly indicated. There is also a good annual review to ensure all areas of the science curriculum are covered. The temporary science co-ordinator is the headteacher who provides good leadership until a substantive appointment is made. Annual monitoring of science takes place. The range and quality of resources is good to support teaching and learning in science.

## 107. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### 107. **Art**

36. There were two of art lessons observed one in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and very good progress in Key Stage 2. The better rates of progress in Key Stage 2 are due to the high quality of teaching and teachers' subject knowledge. Progress in this subject has improved greatly since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory with some pupils in Key Stage 2 under-achieving.
37. From Year 1 pupils learn to develop their observational skills and pencil control. Satisfactory pencil and crayon self-portraits produced by Year 1 pupils lead naturally to Year 2 pupils looking in detail at the work of famous artists. The paintings of Paul Klee were studied by pupils in Year 2 who used their own names to construct patterns in the style of Klee.
38. In Year 3 good quality line drawings of boots and shoes showed shade and texture of the materials. In Year 6 pupils made masks based on those of cultures from around the world. These masks were well observed and effective in their design and manufacture. Of particular note is the quality of artwork in Year 5 which lifts the rate of progress to very good. In this year group pupils consolidate their skills and add considerably to them. Pupils in this class produce very high quality work particularly in the areas of painting and collage. However, all of the work of this class is very good, including modelling and sketching. This work includes high quality watercolours of seashores, art deco designs for plates, mugs and jugs and clay models based on these designs. Landscapes using yarns, hessian and other fabrics were of the highest quality. Amongst this class-based artwork, pupils in the school have also produced 'monumental' work of very good quality. These include townscapes built up of individual tiles from each child in the school and a large mosaic of St Augustine, which welcomes visitors to the school. Pupils have



also made icons of the three wise men who visited the baby Jesus. The quality of this work, stylistically and in the production, was very high. In their studies of famous artists, and in their use of information technology in the art curriculum, pupils make good progress.

39. Pupils are very enthusiastic about art and they respond very positively in art lessons is. They are self-motivating and manage they work very efficiently; attitudes are generally excellent. They understand that they are to seek their own resources and when moving around their classrooms, working in groups outside of their rooms or simply sitting working, they are always well behaved and very attentive to their teachers.
40. Of the two lessons seen, teaching in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it was excellent. Of note was the individual preparation for each child that the teacher undertook in Key Stage 2. The lesson was about perspective and stretching the field of vision. So that each child would be motivated, the teacher had collected two identical photographs for each pupil, based on their own particular interest. The co-ordinator is an extremely good manager who sets very high standards in the subject. The curriculum is a rich mixture of experiences and pupils benefit from the excellent displays which value their contributions and highlight the aesthetic and spiritual importance of art.

## 112. **Design and Technology**

41. Progress is good in both key stages and has improved since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' skills of designing and making are above average. They use tools and materials appropriately and draw on previously acquired knowledge to inform their work. Pupils have lots of the opportunities to practice skills and gain knowledge and to investigate, assemble, disassemble and evaluate simple products. In Year 2, pupils design and make puppets. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have developed previously acquired skills of designing and making further, using a wider variety of tools and materials. In Year 3, pupils make levers, in Year 4 they design, make and evaluate parachutes, in Year 5, shadow puppets and in Year 6 musical instruments and puppets with moving parts are constructed. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate standards. Progress is good at both Key Stage 1 and 2 with pupils understanding the design, make and evaluate process. They have a good grasp of what it takes to make a successful product. Practical skills are developed well with an increasing expectation of complexity and competence in each key stage.
42. Attitudes to design and technology are very good. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic. Good application is shown in the desire to be accurate in measuring and making so the end product is of good quality. They ask and answer questions in order to help improve their designs and demonstrate perseverance when the task is difficult.
43. Teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the National Curriculum. In the best lessons, targets are clearly outlined and the skills to be developed are identified. Generally, the skills of designing and making are well developed and there is thorough analysis of function and how well the design meets its purpose. Good leadership is provided by the co-ordinator. A good policy has been formulated along with schemes of work outlining the skills and knowledge to be acquired at each stage of learning. The school makes good use of the learning resources for design and technology with a well-equipped and well-adapted room, which has an adjacent space for teaching.

## 115. **Geography**

44. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection in Key Stage 1. Examination of pupils' work, discussions with the pupils and observation of lessons in Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils make good progress in geography throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, pupils explore the routes they take to school and make plans of areas in school. Pupils in Year 1 look at land use at Sacrewell Farm. The Year 2 class has two pupils from different cultural background and they have told their classmates about their visits and celebrations.
45. Pupils in Year 3 carry out a street survey of Stamford High Street. During the inspection they successfully

identified key features from a street plan of the area. They learn about places further afield through a collection of postcards from European locations. Pupils in Year 5 have had a three-day residential visit Gibraltar Point. Here they study the course of the Steeping. They have, within their mathematics lessons, made a tidal survey. They study habitats of flora and fauna, plot positions on ordnance survey maps and aerial photographs and the food chain of the sand dunes and salt marshes. This is a comprehensive and detailed study, where pupils of all abilities, including those with special needs, produce work of high quality that they will treasure in years to come. In the lesson, pupils defined “delta” “estuary” and tidal rivers. They described the attributes of a meandering river and silt distribution and were knowledgeable about the three areas of Lincolnshire, the dikes and reclamation of land. In Year 6 pupils study St. Lucia and an area of Derbyshire.

46. The teaching was good or very good in both lessons observed in Key Stage 2. In both lessons teachers had a very good knowledge of the subject and both teachers planned successfully to enable their pupils to learn through practical experience. Their relationships with their pupils are very good and the pupils respond with interest and a commitment to the task. Pupils make good progress because the teaching is good and teachers make good use of the environment to support the subject. However, there is no overall tracking of the curriculum or planning and teachers plan the work individually. When the teaching is good, so is the progress of the pupils. There are not enough systems in place to ensure that all pupils make even better rates of progress in acquiring geographical skills.

## 118. **History**

47. A limited number of history lessons were observed during the week of the inspection, but an examination of pupils’ books and discussion with the pupils indicates that pupils make good progress in the subject in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 progress improves and by the time they are in Year 6 their progress is very good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
48. When they start school, children learn about the difference between the past and present. They study events in their own lives and build up a family tree of their immediate family and grandparents. In Years 1 and 2 pupils study some of the differences between life today and life in the Victorian era. In one lesson pupils in Year 2 showed a good understanding of many of the differences between a Victorian classroom and their own. They enjoyed trying to imitate formal handwriting and use technical language relating to the Victorian schoolroom, talking of “drill” and “monitors”. All were eager to try the slates to do their “sums”. They were not so sure about the punishments! In this lesson the teacher made good use of artefacts to reinforce the pupils’ understanding.
49. Pupils in Year 4 link the work they have been doing in their literacy lessons about prefixes and suffixes to identify the Ancient Greek words from which they stem. Throughout Key Stage 2 history is an integral part of the English curriculum. Pupils write in the role of characters in the past, both real and imaginary. They write play scripts and poetry, letters and reasoned debate. Their work varies from a lively account by the wife of a nobleman of a feast given by Henry V111 to a moving poem of a high standard expressing a longing for peace. In one excellent lesson, Year 6 pupils discussed the use of historical evidence before making deductions about a collection of World War 1 artefacts and accounts. They are very knowledgeable about the definition and implication of fact, assumption and hypothesis and are aware that factors like, for example, politeness, may hide evidence. This progressive acquisition of the skills needed to explore history gives the pupils the tools to research interpret history with high levels of understanding. Pupils with special needs are given good support and have the same high commitment to historical research.
50. The good, and sometimes excellent teaching is supported by good use of visits and visitors. Pupils visit Gainsborough Old Hall and become Tudors for the day, they visit the plague village of Eyam, Stamford Museum, and Sacrewell Farm Centre to look at old household objects and compare religious buildings old and new. They are visited by the County Archaeologist who runs a “hands on” session on archaeology and have a visitor to talk about the Romans. Stamford itself is a rich historical source and the pupils are knowledgeable about the town. The subject makes a major contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## 122. **Information Technology**

51. By the time pupils are eleven at the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is above average and at the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is in line with standards expected nationally. Attainment has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be largely satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress. Two factors make a significant contribution to this progress. Firstly, teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, regularly practise skills. Secondly, the siting of computers in every classroom provides the opportunity for pupils to apply their information technology skills to other areas of the curriculum and hence consolidate and extend learning. At Key Stage 1 pupils use pictures and text to communicate ideas and can control a programmable robot. Software is used to draw repeating patterns of squares, circles and triangles, improving co-ordination. Pupils draft their writing on to a screen using a word processing package and place pictures into their text. Photographs of the mosaic of St Augustine were taken using a digital camera. At Key Stage 2 progress is good. Pupils use computers for a variety of purposes including word processing and researching information. After scanning illustrations these are resized and placed appropriately in to their text. Work in information technology includes capturing data in different forms with a view to presenting it to different audiences and how questions should be framed when collecting the information. Pupils are aware of how information technology affects their daily lives and use information technology confidently in other subjects. Pupils are confident and can discuss the benefits of using computers to support their work.
52. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They share the use of computers and support each other well when working in pairs or small groups. They listen and follow instructions, and complete tasks in the time available.
53. No lessons of information technology were observed although a scrutiny of teachers' planning, curriculum organisation and pupils' work shows that the quality of teaching is good. Teachers use computers and software effectively. Lessons are planned from the scheme of work and assessment is used to set appropriate tasks. They provide opportunities for pupils to use their information technology skills in other areas of the curriculum, and they liaise with support staff so that those pupils with special educational needs can participate fully in the activities. Teachers keep accurate records of each pupil's use of the computer and software and the progress they make.
54. The co-ordinator provides good quality leadership and has been instrumental in developing and implementing the current good quality policy and scheme of work. Resources are of good quality, well maintained, readily available and in constant use.

## 126. **Music**

55. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. During the last inspection some under-achievement was observed at Key Stage 2 and current rates of progress show an improvement. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn how to use percussion instruments correctly and to name them. They listen carefully and are encouraged to express opinions about the music and sounds they hear. Pupils sustain rhythms and sing tunefully in assemblies. No class singing was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Pupils in Year 3 select suitable instruments to create different sounds, and use percussion to accompany singing. They sustain the pitch and rhythm when singing a four-part found. By Year 5, pupils sing songs rhythmically and accurately, sustaining pitch with reasonable accuracy even when singing in two parts. They define and use drones and ostinati and compose music using untuned and tuned percussion in the pentatonic scale. They add structure by using set musical structures like repeating the original theme at the end of their music. In Year 6 pupils clap syncopated and irregular rhythms, sustaining them when playing alongside two contrasting rhythms.

128. A major feature of the music lessons that were observed in Key Stage 2 is the obvious enjoyment and delight that the pupils demonstrate when performing music. Pupils sing with vigour, all performing actions, all smiling, all in tune. They listen to each other, take turns and enjoy the act of performance. Although pupils in Year 2 had some difficulty listening to recorded music, pupils in Year 5 listen with attention to Chinese music, identifying unusual instruments like the di-zi and the drone, and the pattern of the music. There was an appreciative hush at the end. The very good teaching in the oldest classes fired the pupils with enthusiasm and enabled a high level of performance. Pupils of all abilities performed to a high standard. The quality of music provision has improved since the last inspection, but it is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Some sharing of expertise and planning both between teachers and across the key stages would improve the provision in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to play the recorder and to sing in the school choir. Pupils perform in school and the joint schools' carol service and have attended a concert given by the Peterborough Regional College Choir. The school provides a visitor to run Singing for Pleasure workshops.

## 128. **Physical Education**

56. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils develop their hand-eye co-ordination skills by being able to throw and catch with a good level of accuracy. They practised different ways of throwing and catching safely and then took part in a short competitive game, throwing from a sitting position, then from knees and then standing with one hand. Progress was good in this lesson as pupils improved the accuracy of their throwing by working alone and then with a partner. In Year 4 pupils made good progress in developing the skills of netball and football. By the end of the lesson pupils were able to send and receive balls and in striking and travelling with a ball. In this lesson the learning support assistant supported special educational needs pupils so well they too made good progress. Teaching was very good in this lesson as the teacher had planned a very good structure to the lesson, with a suitable warm-up activity and well managed skill development and games practise.

57. Pupils are very attentive, enthusiastic, try hard and thoroughly enjoy their physical education lessons. They concentrate for long periods and give their best. They act responsibly preparing and collecting apparatus and equipment. Overall their attitudes to the subject are very good.

58. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 2. Where teaching is very good, plans are clear and set out the learning objectives and how they will be achieved. Teachers take great care to explain and demonstrate the skills they wish to teach. They have a friendly and purposeful approach and maintain a brisk pace of learning by regularly setting targets for pupils to attain. The curriculum is broad and balanced pupils have good opportunities to take part in residential and outdoor activities, and to take part in inter-school team sports. Extra-curricular football and netball is provided for both boys and girls during lunchtime club activities. There are strong links with the local college and these links have a significant impact on swimming, netball and football that is of a very high quality.

59. The temporary physical education co-ordinator is the headteacher who provides good leadership and sets an enthusiastic example. The curriculum has been developed to include gymnastics, dance and games in Key Stage 1, extending to outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming in Key Stage 2. However, timetable arrangements do not allow sufficient time for these aspects to receive due attention. Staff are well qualified and many have a particular sporting interest and expertise. The facilities for gymnastics, dance and games using the school's facilities and swimming at the local leisure centre are good and there is a wide range and good quality small and large equipment. All of the resources are in very good condition, carefully stored and easily accessible.

## 132. **Swimming**

60. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.

61. Pupils in Year 3 undertake weekly swimming lessons during the autumn term; Year 4 pupils swim in the spring term. Observation of lessons confirms the very good progress made by the pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2. The great majority of pupils swim unaided, competently and safely. Other pupils

demonstrate a commitment to succeed and improve, developing their confidence in the water and how to rest, float and adopt support positions. All pupils demonstrate a variety of means of propulsion using either arms or legs, or both, and develop effective and efficient swimming strokes on their front and back. Pupils are taught the principles and skills of water safety and water confidence and are inline to meet or exceed the standard of being able to swim unaided, at least 25 metres, by the end of Key Stage 2.

62. The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher, instructor and students from the local college are secure in their knowledge of teaching swimming in Key Stage 2. High expectations are established to suitably challenge the pupils and build their confidence in the water. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of individual pupils and to encourage maximum progress to be made. The pupils are very well managed. Time and resources are used effectively and efficiently. Assessment is used to very good effect and to inform teaching and learning and monitor the progress of individual pupils towards meeting the target of swimming 25 metres. Lower ability swimmers are supported very well. The student teachers meet individual and curricular needs by providing one to one or, tuition to pairs of children, so that confidence can be built quickly. This approach has enabled all lower ability swimmers to swim with the appropriate support.
63. Swimming makes a positive contribution to physical education and the curriculum at the school and is highly valued by the whole school community.

136. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

136. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

64. The school was inspected by a team of four inspectors who, over a period of four days, completed a total of 14 inspection days.

65. Inspectors

- visited classes – 44.42 hours (51 observations),
- talked with individuals and groups of pupils – 3.2 hours (7 interviews)
- evaluated the work they had done – 10.33 hours.

In total 57.9 hours was spent on these activities. In addition, interviews and discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers with curriculum responsibilities, ancillary staff and members of the governing body totalling hours 13.8.

1. The inspection included:

- inspecting pupils' written and practical work in all classes, representing low, average and high attaining pupils;
- scrutinising subject work books;
- listening to the reading of a sample of pupils, selected as representative of the range of ability in each class;
- tracking the progress of pupils with special educational needs;
- monitoring pupils' behaviour in and around the school;
- analysing records and reports of pupils' progress;
- inspecting registers and attendance at assemblies;
- scrutinising of the school development plan, curricular and other policies, minutes of governing body meetings and details of the budget;

and an analysis of the 42 responses ( 20.4 per cent) made by parents to the questionnaire. These, together with the views expressed by 28 parents at the pre-inspection meeting, were taken into account.

- **DATA AND INDICATORS**

- **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	206	1	27	4

- **Teachers and classes**

- **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26

- **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	84
Average class size:	29

- **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	328290
Total Expenditure	325520
Expenditure per pupil	1542.75
Balance brought forward from previous year	1400
Balance carried forward to next year	4170

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 206  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 42

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	36	64	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	40	50	2	2	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	12	50	21	2	5
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	36	55	2	7	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	14	55	17	10	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	31	60	2	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	48	10	7	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	21	55	10	12	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	52	43	2	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	48	40	12	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	48	50	0	0	2