

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FLINTHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Flintham, Newark

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122643

Headteacher: Mr Antony Walker

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Crane  
21227

Dates of inspection: 22 – 23 March 2000

Inspection number: 187401

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Inholms Road Flintham Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG23 5LF
Telephone number:	01636 525371
Fax number:	01636 525371
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Avril Bear
Date of previous inspection:	26 February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mrs Barbara Crane	Registered inspector
Mr Tony Anderson	Lay inspector
Mrs Pauline Godsell	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Sandfield Educational Consultants

16 Wychwood Drive  
Trowell Park  
Nottingham  
NG9 3RB

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is smaller than most schools with 89 pupils on roll. Eighteen per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is slightly below average, and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Very few of the pupils are entitled to free school meals or come from minority ethnic groups and all of the pupils have English as their first language. Children enter the Reception class part-time after their fourth birthday and attend full-time in the term in which they are five. Seven children were under five at the time of the inspection. On entry to the school, the children's attainment is above average and their language is well developed. The headteacher was appointed in September 1999 and teaches a class part-time.

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

This is a very good school. Standards are high and the quality of teaching is very good, with some outstanding teaching in Key Stage 2. There is a strong commitment to improvement from the staff and governors. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school and is well supported by the staff. The school recognises its strengths and weaknesses, knows what it needs to do and works resolutely towards its targets. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve high standards because of the very good quality of the teaching. The targets for the oldest pupils give them a clear idea of what they need to do to improve.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to school, develop a high level of confidence and are keen to improve and help each other.
- The curriculum is very well planned so that the pupils use the knowledge and skills gained in one subject very effectively to support their learning in other subjects. This makes the work interesting and relevant.
- The pupils develop a high level of competency in information technology and use it as a tool to support their learning across the curriculum.
- The headteacher provides high quality leadership and monitors the school's performance effectively.
- The good range of activities provided in addition to lessons is greatly enjoyed by the pupils and extends their personal and social development.

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

- The pupils' handwriting could be better.
- The written reports to parents could be more informative.

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

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

The school has made very good progress towards all of the issues raised by the last inspection in 1996. The school's planning for development is more effectively supporting the school's improvement. The governing body is effectively involved in monitoring and supporting the school's work. The curriculum co-ordinators' role has been extended to include monitoring standards. The school's provision for art and music has improved. Standards in the core subjects are higher than at the previous inspection and the quality of teaching has markedly improved.

## STANDARDS

The table showing the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests is omitted as too few pupils took the tests in 1999 for the results to be published. A small number of pupils take the tests each year. The results of tests for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science have been, typically, in the top five per cent of schools nationally over the last three years. The trend in standards is above that seen nationally. Compared to similar schools, the pupils' performance in 1999 was very high in English, mathematics and science. The results of the end of Key Stage tests for seven year olds in 1999 were lower than in previous years due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group.

Standards have improved since the last inspection. The work that the pupils were doing during the inspection confirmed a picture of high standards at both key stages. At seven years of age, standards are very good in reading, writing and mathematics. By the age of eleven, standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education are very high and over half of the pupils are attaining beyond the level expected for their age. The school met its targets for 1999 and is on track to meet the suitably challenging targets set for the current year. A weakness in standards is the pupils' handwriting.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy their work and are keen to improve. They concentrate very well and take pride in their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils know what is expected of them and respond very positively.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The pupils take on responsibility willingly and get on well together. They support each other in lessons and play happily together.
Attendance	Good. The pupils are punctual and enjoy coming to school.

The pupils take an interest in the lessons and work hard. They are friendly, polite and helpful. The pupils are clear about the school's rules and behave responsibly. Attendance is closely monitored by the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

All of the teaching is good or better. Teaching is very good or better in 75% of the lessons and in 25% of these lessons, the teaching is excellent. The outstanding teaching is seen at Key Stage 2. The very good teaching at both key stages in English and mathematics enables the pupils to achieve well. Strengths in teaching and learning include high expectations of the pupils which result in the pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. The teachers plan interesting, lively and challenging activities that capture the pupils' interest. Well-directed questions promote the pupils' thinking and accelerate their rate of learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The pupils benefit from a rich, broad and relevant curriculum. Information technology is very well used to support the pupils' learning. A wide range of interesting activities is planned to extend the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The work is well tailored to meet their needs and the pupils are well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development supports very good relationships, the pupils' awareness of their responsibilities and the consequences of their actions. They are encouraged to consider important issues and develop a sense of wonder. Their awareness of other cultures is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very good level of care is provided. The pupils' personal development is monitored well. The staff know the pupils very well and plan to meet their needs.

The pupils learn in a warm and supportive atmosphere and their welfare is given a high priority. The curriculum builds effectively on the pupils' previous learning. The school has a very good partnership with parents but the reports they receive on their children could be more informative.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a very clear direction for the school and is well supported by the curriculum co-ordinators. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and effective. The staff work well as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well informed. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and monitor the school's progress diligently and effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The analysis of performance underpins the school's work. The school is clear about its strengths and plans effectively to overcome its weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of all available resources. The staffing is good and the accommodation is adequate. The current underspend is earmarked to extend the building to compensate for the lack of a hall. Resources are good. The governors apply the principles of best value in all aspects of their expenditure.



## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children enjoy school.</li><li>• The school has high expectations of their children.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• The staff are approachable.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The school helps their child to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provision for homework.</li><li>• Better information on how their child is doing.</li><li>• More activities out of school.</li></ul>

The inspection findings support the parents' positive views. The evidence from the inspection indicates that a good range of activities is provided out of school. The annual reports that parents receive could be more informative about what their child needs to do to improve and how the parents can help. Homework is now more consistently planned and provided throughout the school.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**The pupils achieve high standards because of the very good quality of the teaching. The targets for the oldest pupils give them a clear idea of what they need to do to improve.**

1. The teachers know the pupils very well and plan challenging work. They set high standards, both for work and behaviour. The pupils approach their work confidently because they have been taught the basic skills very well. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the teacher explained how the pupils could use a story as a 'play script' and how to adapt the narrative as the narrator's part and the dialogue as the parts for characters. The teacher praised the pupils' first efforts but rigorously sought improvement in their use of expression. Her suggestions about how to change the emphasis on certain words helped them to understand how their delivery could be more lively and raised the quality of the final presentation to the class. In a lesson with Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher's interesting and diverse ideas for changing traditional stories into a contemporary setting resulted in the pupils gaining a very good appreciation of the structure of stories and characterisation. The teacher's direction to '*Keep the image of the character in your mind. Paint the picture in words, using adjectives to describe what you want the reader to see,*' focused the pupils' thinking effectively and led to more precise and imaginative use of language. In a challenging lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher probed the pupils' reaction to two poems and asked how they would feel if they had to start again if their life's work was destroyed through war. The teacher explored the pupils' responses through well-directed questions that required the pupils to examine how the poet's use of words elicits a response from the reader. The warm relationships between the pupils and teacher were evident in the interesting and lively debate. The teacher's sophisticated and precise language was reflected in the pupils' replies to questions.

2. The pupils are keen to do their best because of the teachers' evident enthusiasm and delight in their ideas. There is a sense of fun and sharing of ideas. In a mental mathematics lesson, for example, with Year 3 and 4 pupils who were counting on in fives and threes, one boy volunteered that '*It will be easier to count on in fives, because the pattern will be 3, 8, 3, 8 and only the first digit will change.*' The teacher's instruction to '*Convince other people in your group why it is that you think its easier to count on from 3 in 3s than counting up in 5s from 3,*' led to a very good level of mathematical reasoning in justifying their opinions.

3. In the outstanding lessons, seen in Key Stage 2, the pupils become totally absorbed in the work and they are required to apply a high level of intellectual effort. In a science lesson, for example, in the Year 3 and 4 class, the teacher asked the pupils to consider how they could devise a fair test for solubility and how they could best record their work. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm and use of humour ensured that all of the pupils were keen to do their best and find solutions to the problems. The pupils' use of scientific vocabulary was extended by the teacher's precise use of language. A notable feature of all teaching is the way in which the pupils of all ages are encouraged to take pleasure in finding out about phenomena and testing their ideas. The teachers expect the pupils to organise their work carefully and think about ways of improving it.

4. In the Year 5 and 6 class, the pupils are encouraged to take a high level of responsibility for their own learning and evaluate their successes and weaknesses. The teacher sets targets for every pupil, based on her detailed assessment of what they need to do to improve. The pupils know what their targets are and work enthusiastically towards them. They can explain how far they have succeeded and what extra effort is needed. The school plans to extend this target setting to other classes next year.

**The pupils have very good attitudes to school, develop a high level of confidence and are keen to improve and help each other.**

5. The pupils' enthusiasm for their work is evident from an early age. The classrooms have a purposeful atmosphere and concentration and application to work are the norm. The pupils are keen to get started on work and organise themselves well. They readily contribute their ideas and views in discussions and listen carefully to each other. They know that their suggestions will be valued and this raises their confidence and self-esteem. A Year 6 pupil said that: *'I know that people will help me. The teachers will listen to you and understand you.'* These views were shared by her classmates. The pupils are mature and show a high level of respect for their teachers.

6. The pupils are encouraged to respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Year 6 pupils, for example, displayed a very good sensitivity in a discussion in religious education, when they considered others' religious beliefs. When writing a story together, a group of younger Key Stage 2 pupils evaluated each other's ideas and accepted constructive criticism willingly. Older pupils worked in pairs to re-draft a letter and made a concerted effort to improve the final draft. The pride that the pupils take in their achievements is evident in the detailed explanations they give of displays of work in the classrooms.

7. The pupils demonstrate a very good level of independence from an early age and persevere when they are faced with difficulties. They notice what needs to be done and help each other. A young Key Stage 1 pupil, for example, cheerfully came to the assistance of a classmate who was attempting to put on a painting apron, which had the sleeves inside-out. Older pupils are very clear about what they value about their life at school: *'Working in groups lets you listen to other people's ideas. There's not so much pressure on you to get things right and you learn from other people.'*

**The curriculum is very well planned so that the pupils use the knowledge and skills gained in one subject very effectively to support their learning in other subjects.**

8. The teachers' very good planning ensures that the work links together and builds on what the pupils know and understand. This makes the work interesting and relevant. Pupils in the youngest class, for example, used their scientific skills to test materials to find which are waterproof and then used their knowledge to design a waterproof hat for a teddy bear. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 learn how weather affects people's lives in geography and so better understand the sayings and rhymes that they study from folklore in literacy sessions. They study famous paintings in art lessons and discuss how they can surmise what the weather was like from the details in the pictures. These pupils then design kites, suncatchers and umbrellas from appropriate materials in design and technology, having tested materials for different properties in science. The Year 3 and 4 pupils use their knowledge of materials, gained in science, when they write accounts of how artefacts have changed. In science, they use their mathematical skills to produce graphs, diagrams and charts to show how the size of parachutes affects air resistance. The Year 5 and 6 pupils research plants that are common to Nottinghamshire to aid their planning to develop the local dew pond. They use their artistic skills to make detailed observational drawings of these and write detailed accounts to record the evolution of a wildlife area.

**The pupils develop a high level of competency in information technology and use it as a tool to support their learning across the curriculum.**

9. The use of information technology is well planned by the teachers and is part of the pupils' everyday experience. The pupils are excited by the possibilities of information technology and the precision with which they can present their work. They learn to use information technology as a tool in a range of situations. The youngest pupils use a paint program to design compositions based on Mondrian's work in art. Older Key Stage 1 pupils study weather forecasts downloaded from the Internet and check the accuracy of these against their own observations. They produce tally charts and pictograms using data

handling programs and take photographs of artefacts using a digital camera in history lessons. In history, the pupils produce a questionnaire to gather the views of their grandparents about favourite toys from the past. The pupils learn to discriminate and not simply accept the usefulness of programs. Year 3 and 4 pupils evaluate two simulation programs in history and discuss the relative merits of each with regard to their usefulness in learning about Ancient Egypt. The pupils are very skilled in word-processing and undertake a wide range of research using CD-ROMs and show discrimination in searching for precise detail. The oldest pupils develop a high level of competency when they write a program to make bulbs flash in sequence in a model made in design and technology. They use a program to create designs which they make in cross stitch in art. The Year 6 pupils have made multi-media books for younger pupils.

**The headteacher provides high quality leadership and monitors the school's performance effectively.**

10. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear idea of what needs to be done, based on an objective analysis of the school's performance. His dynamic influence is evident in the daily life of the school. He sets an excellent example in his teaching. There is a very good ethos and a strong sense of team work to achieve the school's aims. The staff share the headteacher's commitment to improve. The curriculum co-ordinators, for example, have welcomed the opportunities to extend their role in monitoring teachers' planning and the work in classrooms. The monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher is used rigorously to bring about improvement. The teachers are given detailed, useful feedback on the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching and this is having a marked impact on the standards achieved by the pupils.

**The good range of activities provided in addition to lessons is greatly enjoyed by the pupils and extends their personal and social development.**

11. In addition to the after school activities, which are strongly supported, the pupils are provided with a very good range of activities to extend their experience outside lessons. The Year 3 pupils take part in 'den-building' activities at Bestwood Park. The Year 4 pupils go youth hostelling in Derbyshire and older pupils take part in a week's residential visit. Those pupils who went last year describe their experience as: *'Educational and fun. It helped us to get to know other people and we learned a lot about the countryside. We helped people who had problems, or if they felt homesick.'* The school competed in the Rushcliffe Indoor Athletic League and the pupils are proud of reaching the final. An author and illustrator visited the school as part of the school's events for World Book Day. The pupils particularly enjoyed the illustrator's visit because: *'There were more opportunities to ask questions about her work.'* The visit by the 'Bright Sparks Energy Efficiency Group' was recalled with particular pleasure by the oldest pupils. They extended their understanding of energy efficiency by completing surveys at home, following the visit, and produced energy quotients for each household. One pupil volunteered that the experience had *'Helped me to understand that I need to be aware of conservation and the effects of global warming.'* A pupil who took part in last year's orienteering day at a country park were keen to tell those who would go this year about her experience: *'I thought it was good because it was very varied. It was adventurous and you did it in pairs, without an adult with you. I enjoyed being self-reliant.'*

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?**

### **The pupils' handwriting could be better.**

12. There is room for improvement in the presentation of pupils' work and the consistency with which they develop a neat and legible style of handwriting. There is some untidy writing, particularly at Key Stage 1. There is no scheme of work for handwriting and so the teaching in this aspect of English does not always build on what has previously been learned. The school has identified this weakness through the literacy co-ordinator's monitoring of work.

### **The written reports to parents could be more informative.**

13. The written reports on pupils do not give sufficient information to the parents on what their child needs to do to improve. Some reports give good information about aspects of attainment in English, mathematics and science, but there is too often an emphasis on what the pupils have covered rather than what they can do. There is no indication of what needs to be worked on to improve or how parents might help their children.

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

In the context of its many very good features, the school now needs to improve in the following aspects of its work:

- 1) provide guidance on how handwriting should be taught throughout the school;
- 2) improve the quality of the reports so that the parents have a clearer view of how their child is progressing and what needs to be improved.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

The tables showing the results of the end of key stage tests and assessments for 7 and 11 year olds are omitted as there were too few pupils in 1999 for their results to be published.

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

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

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
25%	33%	42%	0	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	89
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	80
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.3
Average class size	23

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	56

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	186317
Total expenditure	186097
Expenditure per pupil	2243
Balance brought forward from previous year	32970
Balance carried forward to next year	33190

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	89
Number of questionnaires returned	49

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	47	4	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	47	6	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	55	6	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	40	23	8	0
The teaching is good.	73	18	0	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	49	20	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	24	6	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	22	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	55	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	21	0	0	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	31	4	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	35	16	12	4