

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Billingborough Primary School**  
Sleaford

LEA area : Lincolnshire

Unique Reference Number : 120371

Inspection Number: 187652

Headteacher : Mrs A Higgs

Reporting inspector: Trevor Neat  
20007

Dates of inspection: 8 - 10 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706263

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
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Victoria Street Billingborough Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 0NX
Telephone number :	01529 240437
Appropriate authority :	Lincolnshire
Name of Chair of Governors :	Mr John Allenby
Date of previous inspection :	February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Michael Hudson, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Accommodation
Amanda Tapsfield	English Information technology Design and technology Art Music Special educational needs Under-fives	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing Learning resources

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

There are very good relationships.

- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good.
- The enrichment of the pupils' education through links with the community is very good.
- Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Attendance is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- The school gives good value for money.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall.

### Where the school has weaknesses

Attainment in information and communications technology is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2.

- I. The curriculum lacks balance.
- II. Arrangements for the appraisal of staff do not meet requirements.
- III. The provision for children under five is unsatisfactory.
- IV. The accuracy of teachers' assessments cannot be assured for all core subjects.
- V. The cost effectiveness of spending decisions is not monitored closely.
- VI. In addition there are some minor areas of weakness:
  - \*. lesson hours at Key Stage 2 are below the recommended minimum;
  - \*. the position and small physical size of the library reduce the opportunities for pupils to use it effectively.

**The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school. Inspection evidence indicates that in information technology pupils are on course to attain standards that are in line with national expectations, by the end of Key Stage 2. However, at the time of the inspection, a recently adopted scheme of work for that subject had been only partially implemented and standards were not as they should be. The absence of the headteacher, through ill health, for two lengthy periods, has resulted in the system for the appraisal of staff falling behind schedule. The small size of the library, and its location at some distance from most of the classrooms, results in inconsistent use of the reference books.**

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

Overall, the school has made a satisfactory amount of improvement since the last inspection. The governing body has increased its effectiveness and has begun to develop and monitor the curriculum. A system for setting in English and mathematics has helped to improve teachers' expectations of able pupils. Very good progress has been made in producing policies for all National Curriculum subjects. The same is true of the creation of detailed schemes of work. The school's equal opportunities practices are now satisfactory. However, insufficient progress has been made in monitoring the cost effectiveness of spending decisions.

## Standards in subjects

The 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>very high</i> A*
			<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	A*	
Mathematics	B	A	
Science	A	A*	

The number of pupils in each cohort is small and the percentage of children with special educational needs sometimes varies significantly from year to year. As a result, there are fluctuations in the levels of attainment at the end of the key stages, and comparisons between the test results for different years are statistically unreliable. The natural and sometimes large differences in the composition, and hence, attainment of different cohorts were clear at the time of inspection; for example, the present group of Year 6 pupils has a significantly higher proportion of children with special educational needs. In addition, the number on roll has increased markedly, in the last year or so, and pupils are now drawn from a wider range of home backgrounds.

The table above shows that pupils in last year's cohort attained results in English and science that were well above the national average, and very high compared with similar schools. In mathematics, results were above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the present cohort attains standards that are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In information technology attainment is below national expectations and in religious education it is in line with the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus. In other subjects, attainment is as expected, except for music where it is above. At Key Stage 1, the 1999 results were well above the national average in reading, writing and science, and well below in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, results were very high in reading and writing, well above average in science and well below in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the present cohort attain in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, science and information technology. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In other subjects, the oldest pupils attain standards similar to those normally found, except in music, where they are above.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology		Insufficient evidence	Satisfactory
Religious education		Insufficient evidence	Satisfactory
Other subjects		Satisfactory	Satisfactory



The quality of teaching is consistently sound at both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in approximately six lessons in every ten, good in more than three in ten and very good in about one in ten. This is a commendable proportion of good quality teaching and it has a positive effect on the standards that pupils attain.

*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

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils behave very well in classrooms and as they move around the school.
Attendance	Good. There have been no unauthorised absences in recent years.
Ethos*	Good, overall. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and there are very good relationships. There is clear commitment to high standards of behaviour and achievement.
Leadership and management	Sound, overall. The headteacher provides clear educational leadership.
Curriculum	The curriculum for children under five and at Key Stages 1 and 2, is not appropriately balanced. Planning for children under five is not sufficiently based on the nationally agreed areas of learning. Too much time is given to the teaching of swimming at Key Stages 1 and 2.
Pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and these children make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The provision the school makes for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good, overall.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory, overall. There is a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers. The provision of support staff is good. The school has good resources for learning. However, the professional development of staff is unsatisfactory, because the appraisal system is not up to date. This is due to the headteacher's absence during significant periods of illness. The position and small physical size of the library do not provide effective opportunities for pupils to use it.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

\* *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	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• They would find it easy to approach the school with problems or questions about their children.</li> <li>• They feel that the school encourages them to play an active part in the life of the school.</li> <li>• The school enables their children to achieve a good standard of work.</li> <li>• The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.</li> <li>• The school gives them a clear understanding of what is taught.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no significant concerns</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence confirms the positive views of the school held by most parents.

### **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The headteacher, governors and staff should now:

- [1] raise standards in information technology at Key Stage 2 by completing the implementation of the recently-adopted scheme of work; (Paragraphs 105, 107 and 110)
- [2] review the allocation of time to curriculum subjects, particularly the swimming element of the physical education programme; (Paragraphs 33 and 35)
- [3] improve the professional development of staff by reinstating the appraisal process; (Paragraph 60)
- [4] provide the means by which the accuracy of teachers' assessments can be assured for all core subjects; (Paragraph 40)
- [5] improve the provision made for children under five by:
  - (a) making more effective use of the Desirable Learning Outcomes to assess attainment; (Paragraphs 34 and 69)
  - (b) reviewing the balance between teacher and child initiated activities; (Paragraphs 68, 70 and 76)
  - (c) making better use of the outdoor provision to give children opportunities for physical development throughout the year. (Paragraphs 64, 70 and 75)
- [6] improve the monitoring of the cost effectiveness of spending decisions. (Paragraph 63)

The governing body should address the following areas of minor weakness:

- [1] review the lesson hours at Key Stage 2; (Paragraph 35)
- [2] review the use of the accommodation in order that pupils have better access to the library. (Paragraphs 61, 64 and 81)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Billingborough Primary School is situated in a small village on the edge of the Fens. It is smaller than most primary schools. Most of the pupils are from Billingborough itself but about 20 per cent are drawn from surrounding villages. The greatest proportion of these pupils comes from the Aveland ward. The housing stock in the areas served by the school is a mixture of council and former council housing, housing association provision and owner-occupied properties. Some changes have taken place in the socio-economic backgrounds of pupils since the last inspection. The school now receives children from an even wider range of home circumstances. A number of parents are unable to support their children's learning because they lack understanding of literacy skills. A significant number of pupils new to the school have regular contact with social services.
2. The number on roll is rising at a considerable rate. There has been an increase of 20 per cent in about six months. There are significantly more boys, than girls - 48 compared with 39. The areas served by the school are entirely rural. A number of travellers' children join the school from time to time. About 65 per cent of children have playgroup experience before joining the school, but some who live in isolated Fenland locations show significant language delay due to lack of social experience. There is no nursery provision. In the principal electoral ward, eight per cent of adults have had higher education, compared with 13.5 per cent nationally. Twenty per cent of pupils are from high social class households, whereas the national figure is 31 per cent. 1.3 per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with 10.1 per cent nationally. 1.3 per cent of pupils live in overcrowded households. The comparable national percentage is 10.5. An above average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. 20.7 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above the figure found nationally.
3. The school's aims are to provide traditional and very high standards of education, whilst making use of the best of modern practice. Educational priorities for the current academic year are to raise standards in literacy, numeracy and information technology. The school was previously inspected in February 1996.

## 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	4	4	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	3	3	2
	Total School	7	7	6
	National	88 (100)	88 (100)	75 (93)
		82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	4	3	4

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

at NC Level 2 or above	Girls	3	3	2
above	Total	7	6	6
Percentage at NC	School	88 (100)	75 (87)	75 (93)
Level 2 or above	National	82 (81)	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	3	6	9

<b>National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	2	2	3
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	8	7	9
	School	89 (60)	78 (50)	100 (71)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	2	2	2
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	7	7	8
	School	78 (65)	78 (65)	89 (78)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised absence	School	4.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised absence	School	0.0
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	8
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

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

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

4. The number of pupils in each cohort is small and the percentage of children with special educational needs sometimes varies significantly from year to year. As a result, there are fluctuations in the levels of attainment at the end of the key stages, and comparisons between the test results for different years are statistically unreliable. The natural and sometimes large differences in the composition, and hence, attainment of different cohorts were clear at the time of inspection; for example, the present group of Year 6 pupils has a significantly higher proportion of children with special educational needs. In addition, the number on roll has increased markedly, in the last year or so, and pupils are now drawn from a wider range of home backgrounds. The school sets appropriate targets for attainment and makes satisfactory progress in meeting them.
5. When taken together, the outcomes of the national tests over the three-year period 1996 to 1998 show that at Key Stage 1, the pupils' performance was well above the national average in reading and writing, but below in mathematics. At Key Stage 2, similar figures indicate that during the same period, the performance of pupils was well above the national average in English and science, and close to the national average in mathematics.
6. The national tests and teacher assessments conducted in 1999 showed that at Key Stage 1 results in reading and writing were well above the national average, and very high compared with the average for schools of a similar character. The results for mathematics were well below both the national average and the average for similar schools. Teacher assessments carried out that year indicated that results in science were well above the national average and that for similar schools. At Key Stage 2, the results in English were well above the national average and very high compared with similar schools. Results in mathematics were above the national average, and well above the average for schools of a similar character. In science, results were well above the national average and very high compared with the average for similar schools.
7. Children enter school with greatly varying levels of attainment which, overall, are broadly average for their age in all areas of learning. By the time they are five, most achieve the expected outcomes for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. However, there are aspects of their personal and social, and physical development that are below the expected level because of the lack of regular opportunities to engage in play activities, especially those of a physical nature. The children make sound progress, overall.
8. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils make sound progress, and many make good progress, as they pass through the school. At Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress in all subjects. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress in music. In all other subjects they make sound progress, except in information technology. Progress in this subject is presently unsatisfactory over time. The overall quality of teaching has a positive effect on the progress that pupils make. Generally, those with different levels of attainment make sound progress. Pupils consistently made sound, or better, progress in the lessons seen. Most pupils with special educational needs make sound progress at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, they make good progress as a result of the system for teaching pupils in groups of similar attainment for English and mathematics.

9. The pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1, achieve standards in English that are broadly average, and they make satisfactory progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are also broadly average and pupils' progress is satisfactory. They make good progress in spelling and grammar. However, overall progress is reduced because pupils have insufficient practice in some of the different forms of writing, such as extended stories.
10. Pupils at Key Stage 1 attain satisfactory standards in speaking and listening. They speak with expression and listen carefully in a range of contexts. Most answer questions confidently and take part in discussions effectively. This was evident when inspectors listened to Year 1 pupils discussing the story, 'The Tall, Tall Grass', during a literacy lesson. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain satisfactory standards in this aspect of English, and they make sound progress. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently, and offer contributions, which indicate that they have taken account of other children's opinions. They demonstrate maturity of thinking in their discussions. This was evident when safety in science experiments was considered in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.
11. At Key Stage 1, the standards attained in reading are in line with those expected for their age. From an early age, pupils develop an understanding of letter sounds that they use effectively to read unfamiliar words in simple texts. They understand and respond to characters and themes in fiction. The standards in reading attained by most pupils in Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations. Within literacy lessons, pupils read from a range of suitable reading material, including poetry and non-fiction texts. The oldest pupils know how to use an index and an encyclopaedia, and most have good dictionary skills. All pupils take reading books home regularly, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to use books from the school library for independent research. At both key stages pupils make sound progress.
12. Standards in writing are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1. Most pupils make sound progress. They use full stops and capital letters correctly, and many are able to apply this knowledge to their work. Pupils' handwriting is suitably formed, and by the end of the key stage, they are beginning to join their letters. However, few pupils, including those capable of higher attainment, write in sufficient detail or for a suitably wide audience. Consequently, while progress is generally satisfactory, some pupils, particularly those capable of higher attainment, do not always achieve their full potential.
13. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are in line with national expectations. Overall, pupils make sound progress. Pupils write in a range of forms. For example, those in Year 6 write diaries and reports in connection with their work on Anne Frank. However, their overall creative writing abilities are limited because they are not given sufficient practice. Pupils attain standards in spelling, grammar and punctuation that are in line with national expectations. Their handwriting is suitably developed.
14. The pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards in mathematics that are in line with national expectations. They develop satisfactory numeracy skills and use suitable mathematical vocabulary. For example, those in Year 2 can add and subtract numbers to 20, and pupils in Year 1 know the terms 'higher than' and 'lower than'. The pupils presently in Year 6 achieve in line with national expectations. They increase their knowledge of the number system effectively. For example, they add and subtract to two decimal places, and multiply whole numbers by ten, 100 and 1000. They also extend their knowledge of the properties of shapes by, for example, identifying the number of faces and vertices. Pupils become adept at handling mathematical data and understand the meaning of terms such as 'mean' and 'mode'. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils make sound progress at both key stages.

15. The pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 attain standards in science that are in line with national expectations. Sound progress is made at both key stages. Those at Key Stage 1 can work on ideas given by the teacher to make a series of observations as part of an experiment. For example, inspectors saw them using torches to test different objects to see if they let light through. They can name the main parts of plants, such as stems, petals and leaves. They know that roots anchor the plant in the soil. Pupils at Key Stage 2 understand a good deal about forces. In a lesson for those in Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils tested cardboard "spinners" to see how quickly objects fall. They present the findings of their experiments in the form of tables and draw suitable conclusions about the results. They recognise the need for tests to be conducted fairly and use appropriate vocabulary when discussing their work.
16. In information technology, attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils develop appropriate keyboard skills, which they use in word processing. At Key Stage 2, pupils use computers for a variety of purposes. For example, they access information from a CD-ROM program to find information about athletics records to help their work in mathematics. However, the attainment of the pupils in Year 6 is currently below national expectations, since their keyboard and word processing skills are underdeveloped. A new scheme of work has been adopted, but it has not yet been fully implemented.
17. In religious education, pupils at the end of both key stages attain standards that meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Those at Key Stage 1 know about Christianity and its major ceremonies, including, for example, christening. They know, too that the Bible is written in two parts. They begin to learn about other major religions such as Judaism and Islam. Pupils at Key Stage 2 extend their knowledge of Christianity and also begin to understand why religious celebrations are important. For example, they know the significance of Divali to Hindus. They appreciate, also, the importance of the barmitzvar to Jewish children.
18. In all other subjects, attainment is in line with the levels expected of the oldest pupils in the key stage, except in music where the pupils at both key stages achieve standards above the level normally found. Pupils achieve good standards in swimming.
19. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are commensurate with their abilities. At Key Stage 1, overall, these pupils make sound progress against the targets identified in their individual education plans. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress, as a result of the system for teaching pupils in groups of similar attainment for English and mathematics.

#### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

20. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are a strength of the school. The standards achieved at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils play a full part in creating a cohesive and mutually-supportive school.
21. Children under five settle quickly into school life. They soon learn to work, play and co-operate with others. They develop effective relationships and are keen to explore new learning. Most take turns appropriately and respond positively to established routines.



22. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Their responses in lessons are never less than satisfactory. In 54 per cent of the lessons observed, pupils' responses were good, and in 35 per cent they were very good. Pupils show a good deal of interest in their work and listen attentively to teachers. They persevere well when tasks are challenging. They concentrate well on their own work, even when other year groups in their class are sharing class discussions or are involved in more exciting activities. For example, children under five were observed offering make-believe cups of tea to older pupils working diligently at their desks. The older pupils accepted the 'tea' gracefully and continued with their own tasks.
23. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Nearly all parents agree, or strongly agree that the school achieves a high standard of behaviour. There have been no incidents of exclusion during the last three years. Pupils behave very well in classrooms and around the school. Excellent behaviour was observed during swimming lessons. Pupils are courteous, keen to talk with visitors, and proud of their school. Behaviour during lunchtimes in the dining room is very good. Pupils know the routines and expectations well and noise levels are low, despite children being free to chat with each other and with lunchtime supervisors as they wish.
24. The personal development of pupils is very good. They form very constructive relationships with one another. They collaborate well on a range of tasks. This is particularly noticeable in information technology lessons where pupils pool their ideas in order to master a skill and complete a given task. In the playground, pupils play carefully. For example, football players stay inside the designated areas and do not encroach on the games of others. Pupils notice each other and are considerate of the needs of others. Pupils also form constructive relationships with teachers, support assistants and lunchtime supervisors. There is an atmosphere of trust that permeates all relationships in the school. Pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Older children take care of younger ones and show an awareness of their feelings. For example, inspectors noticed that when one of the older boys needed to discuss a mix-up of lunch boxes with a very young member of the school, he bent down in order not to be intimidating. Pupils show initiative and are willing to accept responsibilities. These initiatives are received well by members of staff, who encourage pupils to pursue their own ideas. Prefects take responsibility for keeping the school library in order, and pupils often ask to be allowed to stay in during breaktimes to complete assignments. During the summer term pupils in Year 6 produced a magazine to raise funds for books for the school, arranging the funding of production cost themselves, through selling advertising to local businesses. Others pursue independent research related to work they are doing in class; for example, using CD-ROM packages.

### **Attendance**

25. Attendance is good. The attendance rate in the last school year was above the national average, while unauthorised absence in the same year was well below that average. Both figures are similar to those of the last inspection. There has been no unauthorised absence for several years. Pupils are punctual, and lessons start and finish on time. Most parents observe the absentee procedures including those relating to holidays taken in term time. Together, attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on attainment and progress.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

26. The quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory.

27. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in approximately six lessons in every ten, good in more than three in ten and very good in about one in ten. This is a commendable proportion of good quality teaching and it has a positive effect on the standards that pupils attain.
28. The quality of teaching for the children under five is consistently satisfactory. The teacher's subject knowledge is satisfactory and she has high expectations of children's behaviour. Her planning is detailed, clear, and of good quality, but does not deal sufficiently with the nationally agreed areas of learning for children of this age. She has a good relationship with pupils and her calm, quiet manner promotes an effective learning environment for young pupils. The effectiveness with which she deploys adult help has a positive impact on the progress that children make. However, too little use is made of resources such as those for outdoor play.
29. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is satisfactory in about seven lessons in ten and good in approximately three in ten. Generally, teachers have a sound understanding of what is taught. They have appropriate expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and they plan their lessons effectively. Their methods and ways of working with pupils are sound. Their management of pupils is good and this contributes well to the progress that is made. They use time and resources effectively and pay good attention to assessing the attainment of pupils in lessons, This was evident in an English lesson for pupils in reception and Year 1 class. In the same lesson, good questioning, especially the use of open-ended questions such as "How do we know?" had a positive effect on the progress made.
30. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is consistently satisfactory. It is satisfactory in about five lessons in ten, good in approximately four in ten and very good in at least one out of ten. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they have appropriate, and sometimes good, expectations. This was noticed in the swimming lessons seen by inspectors, in which the provision of challenging activities lead to good progress being made. Teachers plan carefully and keep firm control of their classes. They employ suitable methods and strategies, and use time well to support the learning of individuals. This was clear in a mathematics lesson for older and higher attaining pupils. The attention paid to individuals in this way has a positive effect on their levels of motivation.
31. The teachers are hardworking and dedicated. They are implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies effectively and this is having a positive impact on standards. The very good relationships they develop with their classes considerably enhance pupils' involvement in lessons. They use homework appropriately to reinforce and extend the work done in lessons.
32. Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This has a positive effect on the progress they make.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

33. Significant improvements have been made to the quality and effectiveness of planning, since the last inspection. However, the curriculum still does not make its full contribution to raising the standards that pupils attain.

34. The curriculum for under-fives is not based sufficiently on the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. It is not appropriately balanced, since there is a lack of provision for the full range of early physical experience and for play. Some children move on to the National Curriculum before they are ready. The nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for this age group are not used sufficiently as the criteria for moving children onto the National Curriculum.
35. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is broadly based and relevant. Statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum are met. However, the curriculum is not appropriately balanced. This is due largely to the allocation of inappropriate amounts of time to the teaching of physical education, particularly swimming, in each class. Currently, the whole school goes swimming on Monday morning. Physical education takes up approximately 20 per cent of lesson hours. The allocation given to subjects such as science and religious education is less than that found in most schools. Appropriate amounts of time have been allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This time is used effectively. At Key Stage 2, the lesson hours are below the minimum recommended.
36. Overall, the curriculum promotes the intellectual, personal and physical development of pupils and prepares them effectively for secondary school. The school has worked hard to produce policies and schemes of work for all subjects. The key issue identified in the last inspection report concerning the need to produce detailed schemes of work has been addressed well. This has considerably improved the extent to which pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in a progressive way. The recently-adopted guidance on planning from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is being adapted well to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed age group classes. For example, part of the geography scheme of work is based on a three-year cycle.
37. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Requirements relating to the national Code of Practice are fully met and a satisfactory policy gives appropriate guidance to teachers in the identification and assessment of the relevant pupils. Pupils' curricular needs are met successfully through the combination of a highly-structured literacy support programme and the use, at Key Stage 2, of a system for teaching groups of pupils of similar attainment in English and mathematics.
38. The school makes good provision for personal and social education. Sex education and teaching about the dangers of drug abuse are covered well as part of the structured programmes used at both key stages.
39. A good number of extra-curricular activities enhance the work in lessons. Clubs include those for computer, cookery, sewing, choir, country dancing, line dancing, care for the environment and calligraphy. However, there are few sporting activities available. Opportunities for competitive sport are limited, both in school and in the area.

40. Overall, there are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. An efficient system for assessing what children know when they first come into school contributes effectively to the progress they make. The school has also developed a suitable programme of formal assessments, across both key stages, to track pupils' standards and progress. Statutory requirements to record National Curriculum attainment are met. The recording of the attainment and progress of individual pupils in a 'curricular record' effectively promotes the use of assessment to modify lesson planning. The school makes good use of information gained from analysing the results of national and standardised tests in raising standards through the identification of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. However, it lacks suitable collections of samples of pupils' work assessed in relation to the standards expected in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information technology, and the agreed syllabus for religious education. As a result, the accuracy of teachers' assessments across the required range cannot be ensured.

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

41. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall.
42. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The daily act of collective worship meets statutory requirements, and effectively promotes pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect upon their experiences and those of others, in such a way as to develop their spiritual awareness. The assembly programme shows a strong Christian bias; for example, in its consideration of the disciples of Jesus, and of his parables. Assemblies are very effective in developing pupils' awareness of others, and in helping them consider how their actions can affect their neighbours. This idea was promoted very effectively in an assembly seen by inspectors, about the parable of the unforgiving servant. The religious education curriculum provides pupils with knowledge and insight into the values beliefs and ways of life in other faiths. For example, as part of their work in lessons, pupils in Year 4 consider what it would be like to participate in a Passover meal with a Jewish family. Members of staff actively promote the valuing of each other's ideas and achievements.
43. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The curriculum for personal, social and health education emphasises the principles that distinguish right from wrong. Pupils discuss school rules and the consequences if they are broken. They discuss why we have rules in a community and what a law is. Pupils consider their own rights and responsibilities, alongside caring for others. Staff regularly lead discussions about the problem of bullying, and encourage pupils to talk with someone if they are being bullied, or know of some one who is. The prefects contribute actively to this provision. Pupils know that if they feel unable to talk with a member of staff, they can talk with one of the prefects instead. There is a strong emphasis on citizenship. There is an ethos of celebrating each other's successes, and of monitoring each other's behaviour.
44. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The school's code of conduct emphasises respect for one another and for property. The good quality school discipline policy contains clear details of incentives and sanctions to promote good behaviour around the school. Pupils' social development is promoted at all times and in all situations. Members of staff provide good role models for pupils, particularly in the way they relate positively to one another. During lunchtimes, mid-day supervisors actively promote positive relationships and constructive conversation whilst pupils are eating. This has a positive effect on pupils' social development.

45. Older pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential weekend each year, when they are provided with physical challenges such as abseiling and information technology activities such as monitoring the external environment. These opportunities have a positive effect on the social development of pupils. Pupils are involved in charity fund-raising, and older children regularly entertain elderly folk from the village.
46. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. This was identified as an area for development by the school at the time of the last inspection, and it has made clear improvements in this aspect of its work. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own culture well. The school organises a good range of visits to places such as the village bakery, the museum of Lincolnshire life, and the Lincoln museum Egyptian workshop. All pupils are taken on a theatre trip at Christmas. Visitors to the school have included a musician who showed the children Tudor instruments and played examples of the sort of music people would have listened to in Tudor times. Pupils consider the work of famous artists and musicians and are encouraged to relate these to each other. For example, they contrast the unexpected nature of the melodies and harmonies of Stravinsky's 'Rite of Spring', with Picasso's unusual portrayal of human faces. Some of the pupils' own work has been exhibited in the education offices at County Hall. The school is concerned to educate pupils about the ethnic diversity of Britain today, and ensures that stories and songs from a range of cultures are used. Pupils are given some experience of lifestyles in other cultures. For instance, they have visited an interactive exhibition about the Muslim faith and way of life, and participated in a performance of Asian dance. The school is seeking to establish an Internet link with a school in Finland, in order to further pupils' understanding of ways of life in different countries. The school has a range of musical instruments from other cultures, and a good selection of artefacts from other faiths. However, although there is a good range of displays in the school, their use in promoting awareness of other cultures is underdeveloped.

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

47. Overall, the school continues to make good provision for supporting and guiding pupils, and ensuring their welfare. This provision has a positive effect on the standards that pupils achieve. The school fosters a secure, friendly, and challenging environment in which pastoral care and welfare have a high priority. Members of staff know the pupils very well, and parents confirm that effective support and advice is provided for their children across all aspects of school life. The good quality personal and social education policy incorporates cross-curricular themes such as health, including drug misuse, environmental issues and citizenship. Sex education is structured and sensible, and questions are answered as they arise. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory. Individual records of attainment and progress are kept for all pupils, and their aptitudes and abilities are satisfactorily monitored and assessed. The school makes good provision for helping pupils with special educational needs meet the targets in their individual education plans, and it has an effective policy for challenging higher attaining pupils across the curriculum.

48. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are good. The school's discipline policy is positive in approach, clearly defines expectations and standards, and is supported by a well-balanced, incremental scale of praise, rewards and sanctions. The policy is supplemented by an effective code of conduct, which parents support. There is a sensible and sensitive anti-bullying policy. The supervisory arrangements for lunch and playtimes, including wet playtimes, are good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good and are strengths of the school. The attendance and truancy policy clearly states the importance of punctuality and regular attendance, and explains the educational disadvantages of taking family holidays in term time. The school follows up instances when parents do not comply.
49. Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well being, health and safety are satisfactory. The school has good guidelines on child protection. A child protection officer is designated, trained and known to staff, and effective links are established with the appropriate agencies. The health and safety policy is satisfactory and members of staff have good health and safety awareness. Hygiene and general cleanliness in the school are good, and hazardous substances are stored and handled with appropriate care. The procedures for accidents, illness and medicines, both in school and during educational visits, are satisfactory, and sufficient staff have undertaken first aid training. The school has good fire procedures and emergency evacuations are regularly practised. However, responsibilities for the visitors' book and attendance registers in an emergency are not closely co-ordinated. Professional risk assessments are conducted annually, but the school's pond is not suitably fenced. The inspections of appliances and equipment are either up to date or imminent.

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

50. Overall, the school's partnership with parents and the community continues to be good. The quality of information to parents is good. Effective communication is maintained through a range of means, such as consultations, meetings, events and assemblies, newsletters, notices and school reports. Curriculum workshops have recently been run on literacy, numeracy and homework. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are well structured, clearly written, and easy to read. These documents meet statutory requirements, except that suitably detailed information about staff development and absence rates is not included. The quality of school reports is satisfactory, overall. However, some lack sufficient information about attainment and progress and do not include targets for improvement. Almost all parents are satisfied both with the information the school gives them on the curriculum and with what they are told about their children's progress. The school has a good procedure for handling complaints and parents find it easy to approach staff with problems and questions. Most believe that the school handles complaints well.
51. Parental involvement in children's learning is satisfactory. The school values the part parents, grandparents and friends play in children's education and encourages them to be involved in all aspects of school life. Parents confirm that their involvement is sought and they are made to feel very welcome. A few help in classrooms with reading and computers, or with administrative tasks such as photocopying. A good number give excellent support in swimming lessons. There is an appropriate policy for those who help in school. There is a satisfactory homework policy centred on reading, spelling lists and tables, with exercises and research for older pupils. Parents are asked to help with homework and pupils keep reading diaries. Most parents are satisfied with the work their children are expected to do at home. There is no parent-teacher association. Members of staff arrange fund-raising and social events.

52. Induction arrangements for children from the village playgroup are good. The school's transfer arrangements are very good. They are further enhanced by arrangements with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. As well as academic records, and good pastoral, sporting and social contacts, secondary school teachers' skills and facilities are used to enhance primary learning in subjects such as mathematics and science. The school takes part in sporting fixtures and other events with local primary schools and secondary school pupils undertake work experience at the school. Pupils sponsor activities to support charities such as the NSPCC.
53. The enrichment of school life through links with the community has improved since the last inspection. It is now very good and a strength of the school. The school is an important focal point for the community and it makes every effort to maintain and develop its very good relationships. To support specific topics and enrich the curriculum, the school has a well-considered programme of educational visits. Officers from the emergency services and other visitors including artists and performers help with specific topics. Cricket coaching is provided and there are good links with Peterborough Football Club. The school has close links with the church, which contribute well to their spiritual and cultural development. The school choir performs at dance festivals and carol services. Ministers from the church and chapel occasionally take assemblies. Senior residents are invited to functions at Christmas and in the summer. There are links with several local companies, which are suitably used to help pupils to understand business issues. The school's work is greatly enriched by its local contacts and community links contribute markedly to pupils' progress and their personal and social development.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

54. The school is led and managed effectively. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. She is supported well by the governing body and a dedicated staff. The headteacher has worked hard to achieve good teamwork and provides a good professional role model. The work of the school is guided by a detailed, appropriate statement of aims and objectives. These aims are reflected well in its policies and practices. The school's ethos is good. It is calm, caring and purposeful. The teaching and classroom staff share a clear commitment to raising standards. The pupils feel valued and cared for. All the parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire said that their children enjoyed going to school.
55. The governors have relatively recently set up an appropriate committee structure to support their work. This is beginning to have a positive impact on the effectiveness with which they fulfil their strategic role in managing the school. They are suitably involved in reviewing and evaluating most aspects of the school's performance. Suitable targets for improving literacy standards are set and understood by all teaching staff. Statutory requirements are met, except in relation to the appraisal of teachers and the publication of information. Rates of absence are not included in the prospectus or the annual report to parents and there is insufficient detailed information about staff development in the latter. The school's development plan is a very useful tool for school improvement. It is constructed well, its targets are relevant, costs are identified very clearly and responsible persons are named. There are effective arrangements for monitoring its success.

56. Effective, though largely informal arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching have a positive effect on the standards attained. The role of the subject co-ordinators has developed significantly since the last inspection. Most of their time has been devoted to formulating policies and producing schemes of work. Regular opportunities are taken for them to monitor the quality of planning and the standards that pupils attain, although this process is somewhat lacking in rigour.
57. The day-to-day organisation of the school is smooth and efficient.
58. The quality of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection. The effectiveness of the governing body has increased, due in part, to the adoption of a committee structure to assist its work.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

59. The school has an appropriate number of teachers for the number of pupils on roll. They are suitably qualified and experienced to match the demands of the National Curriculum. An appropriate number of suitably experienced classroom support staff has a positive effect on the quality of learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and children who are under five. The non-teaching members of staff support teachers and pupils well and contribute effectively to the smooth running of the school.
60. The procedures for appraising the performance of staff do not meet requirements. The appraisal cycle is not up to date. This is due to significant periods of absence of the headteacher through ill health. All members of staff have attended in-service training courses in order to enhance and broaden their expertise. The choice of courses is determined by the needs of the school. For example, recent in-service training has focused on the implementation of the new strategies for literacy and numeracy. However, there is not sufficient consideration given to the needs of individual members of staff. This is due mainly to the absence of an effective system of appraisal. Although curriculum leaders are identified, no member of staff has received training in curriculum leadership.
61. The accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. This judgement is similar to that made at the time of the last inspection. The original school is in a Victorian Grade II listed building. This has several times been extended and refurbished and now incorporates the old school house. There is no fire escape from the first floor offices. There are good special educational needs, resource and storage areas. An attractive environmental area and pond contribute significantly to the quality of work in subjects such as science and art. Wall displays effectively enhance the learning environment. However, the library is inadequate and the school hall is too small to allow physical education to be taught effectively, especially to older pupils.
62. Learning resources across the school are good, overall. The school has very good resources for music and art. Overall, it has a very good range of computers and other equipment for information technology, which is being updated gradually. There are Internet links in two classrooms. Resources are good for English, design and technology, physical education and religious education. There are sufficient resources for other areas of the curriculum. Within classrooms, most of the teaching materials and resources are easily accessible for pupils, allowing a degree of independence.

### **The efficiency of the school**



63. The school makes good use of the resources at its disposal. Financial planning is of good quality. The school development plan includes an effective appraisal of costs, and expenditure is targeted effectively on agreed priorities in order to raise standards. The staff and governors are suitably involved in deciding spending priorities under the leadership of the headteacher. The governing body is involved effectively in the budget-setting process, and is kept well informed through its finance committee. Good quality financial information is made available to governors at regular intervals. The school makes good use of the information and advice made available by the local education authority. Monies provided for specific purposes, such as those to meet special educational needs, are spent efficiently. Measures are in place to track pupils' progress and judge school effectiveness. However, although steps have been taken to seek information, the key issue raised in the last report concerning the need for greater rigour in monitoring the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions has not been adequately addressed.
64. The teaching and classroom support staffs are deployed very well. For example, very good use is made of a part-time teacher to bring together, most afternoons, a large Year 4 group that would otherwise be split between two classes. Overall, learning resources and equipment are used effectively to improve the quality of lessons and to raise standards. The school makes good use of resources such as its grounds and the local environment. However, insufficient use is made of some equipment for under-fives. For example, easels and paint are not readily available, and not enough use is made of large apparatus such as wheeled toys to promote their physical development. The accommodation is used effectively, overall. However, the library is currently underused.
65. Financial control and school administration are very good. Computers are used very effectively to monitor and record income and expenditure. The headteacher and governing body receive very good support from the school secretary in the administration of funds. The few recommendations of the last auditor's report have been implemented. The accounts for funds raised by the school are audited annually by a qualified accountant. Day-to-day organisation and administration are of a high standard.
66. Taking into account the higher unit costs due to its small size, the good standards achieved, the good quality of education, including a commendable proportion of good teaching, and its overall efficiency, the school gives good value for money.

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

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

67. At the time of the inspection there were 13 children under the age of five. The children are taught in a mixed age class with the pupils in Year 1. Children join the school in the term after their fourth birthday, and many have attended at the village playgroup before entry to the school. They enter the school with greatly varying levels of attainment which, overall, are broadly average for their age in all areas of learning. Many are ready to join in activities and they interact positively with adults and other children. However, a significant minority has levels of spoken language below those expected for their age, and has difficulty in sharing equipment. School records of attainment on entry show that many children's mathematical ability is often below the levels normally found.
68. The quality of teaching of the children under five is satisfactory, overall. The teacher has a calm manner and develops very good relationships with the children. This helps them to settle quickly into school and feel at ease. She has high expectations of behaviour which, together with her effective control and management skills, ensure that the children apply themselves well to their tasks. The children's activities are planned carefully and very conscientiously. However, the planning lacks appropriate balance and relevance. It is not sufficiently rooted in the nationally agreed areas of learning for children of this age. There is a lack of provision for the full range of early physical development, and for free play. The children do not have enough opportunities to make their own choices of equipment and apparatus. The school funds the support of a NVQ student for four days a week, who assists the class teacher well.
69. Baseline assessments, undertaken during the autumn term of the year in which children are five are used to plan programmes of work for children of all levels of attainment. Ongoing and informal assessments made by the teacher are used effectively, and she regularly makes provision for individuals who require assignments slightly different from others in the class. However, the nationally-agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes are not used sufficiently to judge the attainment and progress of the children, and their readiness to begin work on the National Curriculum.
70. Overall, the children make satisfactory progress. By the time they are five most attain the expected learning outcomes for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. However, there are elements of personal and social development and of physical development where pupils do not attain the expected learning outcomes. This is because there is a lack of opportunities for children to select activities or resources. Also, they do not have enough free access to a secure play area where they can use large equipment such as wheeled toys.
70. **Personal and social development**
71. The children under five years of age make satisfactory progress in most aspects of this area of learning. They settle quickly into the class and soon learn to work, play and co-operate with others. They are well behaved. Most share toys and resources happily and take turns when working with others. Most are independent in their personal needs. They learn to tidy away at the end of each session. They develop effective relationships with adults and each other and are keen to explore new learning tasks. They respond positively to well-established daily routines, which give them confidence and a sense of security. However, they do not fully attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes for personal and social development because they do not have sufficient opportunities to select activities or toys for themselves, and to develop their own play activities.

71. **Language and literacy**

72. The quality of teaching and the provision for children's language development are satisfactory. The teacher and her student helper manage the children well and their effective intervention, together with the quality of talk and questions, have a positive impact on children's speaking and listening skills. Opportunities for pupils to develop language skills through role-play are underused, although when appropriate opportunities are taken they have a positive impact on children's learning. This was evident during introductory activities for a project on Pocahontas. Children make sound progress and the attainment of the majority of children is at expected levels by the time they are five. They listen attentively to stories, respond willingly to questions and talk about their activities using a growing vocabulary with confidence. They handle books properly, knowing where they begin and that pages are read from left to right. All children can write their own name by the time they are five, and know the sounds of many of the letters of the alphabet. Some children are able to recognise common words in their reading books. Those who have already attended school for two full terms have progressed to reading simple books, and the rest can tell a story from the pictures in a pre-reading book. Older children copy underneath their teacher's writing a sentence of their own creation.

72. **Mathematics**

73. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Planning is thorough, showing clear structure and specific aims. Activities closely match the differing needs of the children. For example, one of the youngest pupils was encouraged to show each group in the class her plate of five balls made from modelling dough. Each time she was encouraged to tell them how many she had made, in order to promote her understanding that the number does not change. Satisfactory levels of challenge and good relationships contribute positively to children's understanding of numbers. By the age of five, they use mathematical language to describe shape, size and quantity. For example, they were observed during the inspection using the terms 'more' and 'less' to describe the number of currants in drawings of biscuits. Children develop and extend their ability to count appropriately. In one activity seen by inspectors, the youngest children were consolidating their understanding of the number six by making rings from play dough. They also compare, match and order everyday objects. Most recognise numbers to ten and begin to use nought appropriately. The majority attains the Desirable Learning Outcomes for mathematics by the time they are five.

**Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. The children make sound progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and manufactured world. By the time they reach the age of five most attain the expected level. They can talk about their families, and events in their lives. They consider the environment in which they live, and explore features of living things, such as the creatures in their book, 'The Tall, Tall Grass'. The children know the villages from which they come and the name of the town where they go swimming. They can talk about places they have visited on holiday. They can discuss methods of transport and can say which are appropriate for given destinations. As part of their topic entitled 'Ourselves', the children talk about parts of the body, emotions and things that make them happy. They explore and select materials and use skills such as cutting, joining and sticking to make models to their own designs. They use computers to draw and to write their names using a graphics program.

74. **Physical development**

75. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory. Pupils are managed well and kept safe. Support staff are deployed effectively and the apparatus is used well in physical education lessons. The children make sound progress against many of the outcomes for learning in this area. They learn to move confidently and imaginatively. For example, they were observed creating movements in imitation of creatures such as birds, caterpillars and snakes. They show good awareness of others as they move. They use balancing and climbing apparatus with confidence and control. They handle tools, materials such as modelling dough and construction equipment with suitable skill. However, they do not attain appropriately in this area of learning because they do not have enough opportunities to make suitable use of a range of large apparatus such as big construction kits and toys on which they can ride.

75. **Creative development**

76. The children make satisfactory progress and by the time they are five their attainment, overall, is in line with expectations. They explore sound and rhythm in music and dance activities. They enjoy singing in assembly, where they make a good contribution and know the words of the songs well. They experiment with colour and paint effectively; for example, when painting houses for the class's Fire of London mural. They develop the ability to use their imagination in art dance and music. They enjoy stories and imaginative play, such as playing in 'Pocahontas' tepee' and inviting the inspector to tea in the home corner. However, a lack of regular, appropriate opportunities to choose, for example, to paint at an easel, has a limiting effect on the progress that the children make.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

77. Natural changes in the composition of successive cohorts, including the percentage of pupils with special educational needs, leads to fluctuations in the levels of attainment. The small number of pupils taking the tests makes year on year comparisons unreliable.
78. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieved results in reading and in writing, that were very high in relation to the national average. All pupils attained Level 2 or above, which was very high in comparison with the national average. The percentage attaining the higher, Level 3 was very low compared with the national average. At Key Stage 2, the 1999 test results were well above the national average. The percentage of pupils who attained at the expected Level 4 or above, and the percentage achieving the higher Level 5, were both well above the national average. Compared with those for similar schools, the results were very high. In 1998, results at Key Stage 1 in reading and writing were well above the national average and very high compared with those for schools of a similar nature. At Key Stage 2 that year, results were broadly in line with the national average and above the average for similar schools.
79. Inspection findings show that, at the end of both key stages, the current Year 2 and Year 6 cohorts attain standards that are broadly average. Pupils make satisfactory progress through both key stages.
80. Pupils in Key Stage 1 attain satisfactory standards in speaking and listening. They make sound progress. Pupils speak with expression and listen carefully in a range of contexts. They answer questions confidently and take part in discussions effectively. This was evident when

pupils in Year 1 were observed discussing how the different creatures in their class book, 'The Tall, Tall Grass', perceive their environment. Pupils also use their speaking and listening skills appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. For instance, during a mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 2 made good use of discussion in their work on halving and doubling. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain satisfactory standards in speaking and listening. They make sound progress. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently, paying close attention to the comments of others, and offer contributions, which indicate that they have taken account of their views. This is particularly evident during the part of the literacy hour devoted to a shared text. Here, pupils demonstrate maturity and responsibility in their thinking about various issues; for example, during a discussion about the instructions necessary to maintain safety during science experiments. They enjoy discussions and are keen to share their ideas.

81. In Key Stage 1, the standards attained in reading are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils develop an understanding, from an early age, of letter sounds, which they use competently to read unfamiliar words in simple texts. They understand and respond to characters and themes in fiction, and sometimes predict what will happen next in stories. The school promotes a structured approach to reading and this helps pupils to develop the necessary skills. The standards in reading attained by most pupils in Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils confidently select their reading material and some bring in their own from home. Within literacy lessons, pupils read from a range of suitable reading material, including poetry and non-fiction texts. The oldest pupils know how to use an index and an encyclopaedia, and most have good dictionary skills. They enjoy talking about books and their personal preferences, but some do not find it easy to make comparisons with other books that they have read. In class, pupils discuss aspects of a range of texts they have considered together in literacy lessons. All pupils take reading books home regularly, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to use books from the school library for independent research. Pupils at both key stages make sound progress.
82. Standards in writing are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1. Most pupils use full stops and capital letters correctly, and many are able to apply this knowledge to their work, including subjects other than English. Their writing is suitably formed, and by the end of Key Stage 1 letters have tails and pupils are beginning to join their handwriting. However, few pupils, including those capable of higher attainment, write in detail, at length or for a suitably wide audience. For example, in the written work presented few pieces of writing extended for more than five sentences. Consequently, while progress is generally satisfactory, some pupils capable of higher attainment do not always achieve their full potential. Writing standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils use a range of forms of writing, such as poems, letters, factual prose, plays, instructive paragraphs and reports. Standards of spelling, grammar and punctuation are satisfactory, and most pupils use a fluent, joined handwriting script. They consider the structure of a story and use a good range of interesting words, but their creative writing abilities are limited because they are not given sufficient practice. At both key stages, pupils make sound progress.
83. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They behave well in lessons and most are attentive. They concentrate well, especially when lively discussion captures their attention and activities are interesting. This was particularly evident when older pupils predicted the outcome of following a set of instructions for an experiment with fizzing mothballs. They relate very effectively to other pupils in the class, co-operating well when tasks require them to share resources and work together. They settle readily to their work and apply themselves well to their individual tasks.
84. The quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory at Key Stage 1. It varies from satisfactory to good. Planning is linked closely to targets set in the National Literacy Strategy and in the

new published scheme of work. Lesson planning has a clear focus and expectations of pupils are high. The teachers and classroom assistants have very good relationships with the pupils. They know their personalities, preferences and circumstances well. The teachers use classroom assistants well to give support to all pupils, particularly during literacy lessons. Teaching is never less than satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Its quality varies from satisfactory to very good. All teachers use questioning techniques well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. They encourage them effectively to consider elements of the literature they study, such as the sort of verbs required when writing a set of instructions. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils promote contributions to class discussion and contribute well to pupils' learning. Class teachers show that they enjoy pupils' ideas and contributions to discussion and this fuels pupils' enthusiasm further.

85. Teachers make good use of support staff to extend the learning of younger pupils and those with special educational needs. The timetable is planned to ensure that a member of the support staff is available to work with pupils who need extra support during every literacy lesson. The teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and the pace of lessons is often brisk. Opportunities for day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress are not planned for formally. However, members of staff do notice regularly pupils who struggle or who find a task easy, and respond quickly to give them more appropriate assignments. Reading and spelling are set regularly for homework and this promotes pupils' development in these areas.
86. Teachers use a range of standardised assessment tasks regularly, and they use the results to put pupils into attainment groups for literacy. The optional national tests are used to identify areas of weakness in individual pupils' attainment in English, as well as in the school's overall provision. In marking, insufficient use is made of comments that show pupils how to improve their work.
87. Although there is insufficient opportunity for the direct monitoring of teaching and learning, the subject co-ordinator knows which levels pupils are attaining in each class through regular, informal discussions with other teachers. This ensures that planning builds in a continuous and progressive manner on what pupils know, understand and can do. The school's strategy for literacy is effective. Pupils' literacy skills are suitably used and extended in work in other subjects. Resources for the teaching of English are good, overall, with a good range of textbooks and teacher resources. These help staff to prepare work for all levels of ability. Although the library is a pleasant and inviting room, because of its location it cannot be used effectively by class teachers to encourage and support pupils to undertake independent research. Also, because of its small size it cannot be used for whole-class lessons on research skills.

## **Mathematics**

88. The results of the Key Stage 1 national mathematics tests in 1999 were well below the national average. Approximately seven in ten pupils reached the expected Level 2, but none achieved the higher Level 3. When compared with similar schools, their performance was also well below average. However, because the number of pupils taking the tests is small, levels of attainment fluctuate considerably. For example, the national tests of 1998 showed that results were above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that most of the present group of Year 2 pupils attain in line with the national expectations for this age. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved results in the 1999 statutory tests which were above the national average at both the expected Level 4 and at the more difficult Level 5. Compared with similar schools, the results were well above average. In 1998, in similar tests, that year's cohort attained results that were below the national average, but broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Evidence gathered

during the inspection shows that the pupils presently in Year 6 achieve in line with the national expectations. The small number of pupils taking the tests each year makes it statistically unreliable to compare year-on-year attainment.

89. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are able to recognise simple number patterns. For example, they can colour the numbered squares on a grid to show sequences of two or ten. They add and subtract numbers to 20 and present their results in a variety of ways. Year 1 pupils use appropriate mathematical terms such as 'higher than' and 'lower than', and know which of two numbers below 20 is the larger. Pupils apply their knowledge of numbers to activities such as handling money. For example, they can show various ways of making up 19 pence using coins of different values. Higher attaining pupils begin to solve problems using division. Most pupils recognise and name common three-dimensional shapes such as cones, cylinders and cubes. Higher attaining pupils recognise right angles and understand about lines of symmetry. Most develop suitable ability to show information in charts or simple graphs. For instance, they construct bar charts to show how many letters are in different words they are using.
90. At Key Stage 2, pupils increase their mathematical vocabulary. Older pupils use terms such as 'mean', 'mode', 'median' and 'inverse operations'. They undertake investigations and work to solve problems, such as one concerning Pascal's triangle. Younger pupils in the key stage begin to use and record simple fractions. For example, in a lesson observed by inspectors, most knew that five tenths was equivalent to a half. Older pupils can add and subtract to two decimal places and perform simple operations with mixed numbers. Most can name well-known two-dimensional shapes and recognise their properties. Pupils learn about probability and undertake work such as that to find the likelihood of sustaining particular types of injuries.
91. Overall, pupils develop their literacy skills appropriately in mathematics lessons, but, especially at Key Stage 2, opportunities for pupils to explain their ways of working are not always taken. Computers are used appropriately to support pupils' learning in mathematics lessons.
92. Pupils at both key stages make sound and often, good progress. They develop their numeracy skills effectively. Their progress in other aspects of mathematics is satisfactory. The system for teaching pupils in groups of similar attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 2 has a positive effect on the progress that pupils make. It helps to ensure that higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged. In all the lessons observed during the inspection pupils made sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to their prior learning at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. The provision of additional mathematics lessons after school at the nearby secondary school helps the progress of older pupils, as well as facilitating a smooth transition to the next stage of their schooling.
93. Pupils respond well to work in mathematics lessons. They work hard, especially at Key Stage 2, and behave very well. Most try to work independently and nearly all co-operate effectively when working with partners, or in groups. Their good attitudes to learning have a positive effect on the progress they make.
94. The quality of teaching is consistently sound at both key stages. Lessons are prepared well and planned effectively. Adult helpers are briefed thoroughly and are deployed appropriately, and often well. Teachers have sound levels of subject knowledge and use their time well to support the learning of individual pupils. They are skilful in managing and controlling their classes. This contributes well to the standards that pupils achieve. Occasionally, the activities chosen for different attainment groups are not sufficiently challenging and do not present opportunities for pupils to choose or to experiment. Pupils with special educational needs are sometimes not provided with suitable learning resources, such as number lines.

95. The provision for mathematics evident at the time of the last inspection report has been at least maintained.



## Science

96. Statutory teacher assessments carried out in 1999 showed that at the end of Key Stage 1 levels of attainment were well above the national average and the average for similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2 in the same year, the results of the national tests were well above the national average and very high compared with that in similar schools. At Key Stage 1, all pupils achieved the expected Level 2, but none attained the higher Level 3. All the pupils at Key Stage 2 reached the expected Level 4 and almost six in ten attained the more difficult Level 5. This was well above the national average and very high compared with the levels in schools of a comparable character. In similar tests in 1998 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved results that were in line with the national average and above the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are in line with national expectations. The small size of the cohorts taking the tests makes the identification of trends in attainment over successive years unreliable.
97. At Key Stage 1, pupils can respond to suggestions about how to make a series of observations as part of an experiment. They can use simple equipment such as torches to compare events. For example, they were observed by inspectors developing the idea of translucence by testing different objects to see if they let light through. A scrutiny of their previous work showed that they also carry out experiments using prisms and jars of water to explain how rainbows are created. Pupils also know that plants have roots that anchor them in the soil. They recognise and name the main parts of flowering plants such as leaves, stems and petals. They understand the different properties of a range of materials. They can, for instance, distinguish between those that are rough and smooth, and clothes that keep us warm or help us to stay cool.
98. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make predictions when appropriate in their experiments. For example, in their testing of the effect of different surfaces on how marbles travel, most are able to say in advance, which materials will allow the swift passage of the marbles and which will hinder their progress. They present their findings clearly in the form of tables and draw appropriate conclusions about the results. In a lesson for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 it was clear that most children understand the effects of gravity and are able to explain how air will cushion the fall of objects. They understand the term 'air resistance' and recognise the need for fair testing. Pupils use Newton meters to measure forces and carry out experiments to test the effort needed to move objects such as bricks.
99. Pupils develop their literacy skills appropriately in science lessons at both key stages. They use their numeracy skills effectively, for example, in constructing and interpreting simple line graphs to record their results.
100. Pupils make sound, and often good, progress at both key stages. Overall, they make appropriate gains in the different aspects of science. However, they do not record sufficiently often, in their writing about experiments, how they have made them fair tests. Pupils at different levels of attainment make appropriate progress, overall. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to their prior learning. Consistently sound progress was made in the lessons seen during the inspection.
101. Pupils have very good attitudes to work in science lessons. They work together very well and show very good levels of interest. They apply themselves very effectively and relate very well to their peers and their teachers.
102. Their very good behaviour and very good levels of motivation contribute very well to the standards they achieve.

103. The quality of teaching is consistently sound at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, good preparation and use of resources contribute well to the progress made. Sound knowledge of the content of lessons and clear expectations of the quality of written work are strengths of the teaching. However, not enough responsibility is given to pupils for deciding how testing and recording might be done. At Key Stage 2, the teachers' very good management and control of pupils have a direct effect on the progress that is made. Effective provision is made to support pupils with special educational needs and the expectations of the role that pupils will play in deciding how to proceed are appropriate.
104. Provision for science has improved significantly since the last inspection. The creation of a scheme of work has made the progressive acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding more certain.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

105. Pupils attain standards in information technology in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Progress over time in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. This is because the new scheme of work, which builds in a progressive way upon what pupils already know, understand and can do, has not been in place until this term. Progress was good in the lessons observed at Key Stage 2. On the basis of the good progress currently made in lessons, inspectors judge that pupils are on course to achieve at nationally expected levels by the time they leave the school.
106. At Key Stage 1, pupils can use the word processor to print a piece of prose, and can alter the size of the font. They are able to control a mouse to create line drawings. Keyboard skills develop appropriately and pupils can retrieve and store work with help. Pupils investigate the possible moves a programmable robot can make. The more able pupils by the end of the key stage can interrogate a CD-ROM for information, and instruct the computer to print out chosen pieces of the text.
107. At Key Stage 2, pupils use the word processor to save, retrieve, edit and print their work. They produce short plays, the text for picture books, and posters. Although there is evidence of work done by last year's Year 6 which shows skills at expected levels, the present oldest pupils in the school do not have the keyboard and word processing skills expected of their age. Pupils enter, save, retrieve, and modify data in a database and use the program to present the information in a range of graphical forms. They can generate a series of instructions for a programmable toy to achieve particular results; for example, to move in a square of specified dimensions. Pupils use a graphics program to produce anti-smoking posters, and last year's Year 6 produced a fund-raising magazine. Pupils interrogate a CD-ROM for information they require; for example, about athletics records. They use sensing equipment to monitor the external environment when they go to a residential camp. However, their ability to use simulation programs appropriately, is limited.
108. Pupils enjoy using information technology equipment. They collaborate effectively in joint assignments, are keen to share their work and show pride in their achievements. All pupils handle the equipment carefully, and most become totally absorbed in their tasks.
109. The quality of teaching in information technology is satisfactory, overall. It varies from satisfactory to good. Teachers' knowledge is at least satisfactory and most have strong

information technology skills. They know how to develop the appropriate skills in pupils. Teachers' expectations of pupils are best when staff are realistic about children's previous experience, but have an urgency to move them forward and help them catch up. Teachers' planning is clear and they make good use of the published scheme to address areas which pupils do not understand. Teachers use good questioning skills to encourage pupils to experiment with a range of strategies. Many judge well the extent of their involvement and intervention, using questioning appropriately to help pupils solve problems for themselves. Teachers make good use of time, allowing pupils to work through elements of the scheme at their own pace. They make good use the range of equipment available by planning a variety of activities at any one time. However, some tasks, such as those in which pupils explore CD-ROM reference programs, lack sufficient focused challenge to move pupils forward at an appropriate rate.

110. The new scheme of work, introduced this term, provides an appropriate balance across the elements of the information technology curriculum, and is a sound basis for the future development of the subject. Information technology appears as a weekly lesson on each class's timetable as well as being used regularly in other lessons. Assessment of pupils' progress is based on observation and discussion with pupils. Examples of pupils' work are saved on disk, and pupils make useful evaluations of their work.
111. Information technology work contributes well to pupils' social development in that it promotes good sharing and collaborative work. It also promotes their cultural development effectively. For example, pupils use the CD-ROM to find out about the culture of previous ages, such as Tudor life. Few pupils have access to computers at home and so the school provides good access to this element of modern culture.
112. There is strong leadership for information technology and the co-ordinator shares a vision for the development of the subject with the headteacher, which has a positive effect on the standards attained. She monitors pupils' progress informally at present, and the effectiveness of this is a function of the close teamwork of the staff. The co-ordinator plans to evaluate the new scheme of work and the progress that has been made through it, at the end of this term.

### **Religious education**

113. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, an examination of pupils' current and past work and a scrutiny of planning documents show that at the end of the key stage, pupils attain standards in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is also in line with the expected standards. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress through both key stages.
114. Pupils at Key Stage 1 increase their self-knowledge by, for example, expressing their likes and dislikes. They learn about Christianity and its ceremonies. For example, they learn about christening. Their knowledge of the Bible improves appropriately. Most know that it is divided into new and old testaments. Pupils know too, about the setting up of the British and Foreign Bible Society. They know that God loves us and acts like a shepherd to look after us. Pupils also learn about religious symbols. This supports their learning about other religions such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. For example, they recognise the artefacts such as the menorah, tallith and torah scrolls, found in a synagogue. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand the significance of celebrations in religious and everyday life. This work extends to other religions. For example, they study the festival of Holi. In a lesson for Years 4,5 and 6, it was clear that pupils know the significance of Divali to Hindus. They understand that it is a time for hope, and recall that lights play a major part in the celebrations and act as a symbol. Higher attaining pupils know the origins of the festival. Pupils also study Judaism and know

the importance of the barmitzvar to Jewish children.

115. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good. Their presentation of work is good and they take pride in it. For example, drawings of artefacts are very effectively added to written work to illustrate it tastefully.
116. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is sound. The very good relationships that teachers have with pupils enhance their involvement in lessons. Lessons are prepared well and resources are used to good effect. In a lesson for Year 4 pupils, good explanations of the mendhi patterns being discussed, promoted pupils' understanding well. The practical involvement of pupils through an art activity for part of a lesson for pupils in Year 5 and 6, had a positive effect on their levels of interest. The school makes appropriate provision for teaching religious education, but it was not possible to see lessons at Key Stage 1. As a result, there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching.

## **Art**

117. No teaching of art was observed. Judgements have been made on the basis of teachers' planning and of the work on display.
118. Standards attained in art are in line with those commonly seen for the age of pupils in the school, and the displays around the school give evidence of sound progress over time by all pupils.
119. Pupils in Key Stage 1 apply paint with brushes to produce items such as a class mural of the Great Fire of London. They also print with paint, sponges and string. They make three-dimensional models with reclaimed materials, and create collage pictures using a variety of papers and fabrics. They build up a class mural, such as that based upon the book, 'The Tall, Tall Grass', where the background scene is created and the creatures are added as the theme progresses. Pupils also have good opportunities to use information technology to draw and create patterns.
120. Pupils in Key Stage 2 extend their experience of a wide range of techniques. They use collage to make detailed studies of walls around the village. They also use collage to create portraits of Tudor characters, which show good observation of the textures of the fabrics in the paintings of the time. They make careful observational drawings such as sketches of bridges in pencil and studies of plants in pastels. They consider the work of famous artists and apply their techniques to their own work. For example, they create pictures in the style of Monet and others demonstrating pointillism. They also produce watercolour impressions of Rousseau's jungle paintings. Their fabric work includes weaving and stitchcraft. In addition, they create collages, such as those of insects, using a range of fabric scraps and embroidery on netting.
121. Pupils are enthusiastic about their artwork, and are pleased to talk about the techniques they have used. Teachers provide appropriate challenges for pupils within their art curriculum, and relate well discussions in other subjects to work about the appreciation of art. For example, parallels were drawn in a music lesson observed during the inspection, between the artwork discussed and the pieces of music to which the pupils were listening.
122. The scheme of work for art provides an appropriate balance across a range of techniques and gives pupils experience of a wide range of the work of famous artists. There is evidence that within the scheme of work, pupils experience the art of other cultures such as ancient Roman mosaics, aboriginal murals, Islamic patterns and tribal clay work. This has the potential to contribute well to their cultural development. The resources for art are very good, with a wide

range of good quality papers, resources for textile work, art tools and three-dimensional materials. This has a positive effect on the standards that pupils achieve.

122.

### **Design and technology**

123. No teaching of design and technology was observed. Judgements have been made on the basis of teachers' planning and of the work on display.

124. Pupils attain standards in line with those commonly seen for pupils of this age. The work on display shows satisfactory progress over time in the development of making and designing skills.

125. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make models from reclaimed materials and investigate the strength of different adhesives. They find by trial and error the best designs to give their model robots or creatures strong limbs. The oldest children investigate how toys move, and consider wheeled vehicles. They investigate how to fix axles to chassis in order for the wheels to move.

126. Pupils in Key Stage 2 investigate cams, and design and make models with moving parts using this device. They consider different types of hinges, and make use of slides and levers in their own designs, such as those for flap books. They review different types of joints – those that move and fixed joints - and discuss which suits which design best. They also consider pulleys and how winding mechanisms help in the lifting of heavy loads. Whilst much of the programme is practical, pupils do have experience of designing, and discover for themselves the need for accurate measuring.

127. Since no lessons were seen, no judgement is made of the quality of teaching. The school has adopted the scheme of work for design and technology from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. It has plans to adapt this to produce a programme of work to suit its own needs. Resources for design and technology are good. This provision has a positive effect on the standards that pupils achieve. Informative displays that celebrate pupils' work and explain the conclusions they reached, for example, during their project on joints, levers and pulleys, enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.

### **Geography and history**

128. It was only possible during the three days of the inspection to observe one lesson in geography. No lessons of history were seen. In both subjects, a scrutiny of pupils' past work, reports and photographs of educational visits, teachers' planning and records, displays and discussion with pupils inform inspection findings.

129. At both key stages, the attainment of the oldest pupils in history and geography is broadly in line with that found in most schools, and pupils make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

130. Through the study of their own location and those of historical interest, pupils have developed an understanding of chronology, of how life and work have changed over time, and knowledge of places and geographical themes. The reporting of visits and the retelling of important historical events make an appropriate contribution to improving pupils' literacy skills.

131. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound awareness of places beyond their own area and can name a number of other countries. Those observed in a lesson for reception and Year 1, began to distinguish between similarities and differences, for example, in the climate of places visited by 'Barnaby Bear'. Some are able to recall European and world-wide locations visited on holiday. Pupils talk appropriately about their own environment and name local features

such as letterboxes. They can use simple geographic terms correctly for physical features such as rivers, beaches, islands and cliffs. They can follow simple plans and sketch maps, such as those showing a route around a village. Pupils at Key Stage 2 extend their knowledge of their own locality, and their wider geographical understanding, by studying areas such as the village of Kaptalamwa in Kenya. They continue to increase their geographical vocabulary to include physical features such as plateau, volcano and rift valley. They begin to appreciate the differences between the climate and landscape of Kenya and Britain, and between their own homes and those of the Kenyan villagers. Pupils can locate countries neighbouring others using their atlases. They are able to read maps including those featuring contour lines. However, their understanding of the effects of humans on the environment is underdeveloped.

132. Pupils at Key Stage 1 show that they are beginning to understand the passage of time when they discuss the changes to their own lives and those of relatives. They study life in Tudor times and learn about the differences between rich and poor. They know about Tudor musical instruments and the signs of shopkeepers and merchants. Their knowledge of chronology increases through the construction of a timeline showing the main events of the period, such as the Great Fire of London. Pupils at Key Stage 2 learn about the features of past societies in their studies of ancient Egypt. Literacy skills allow pupils to access historical details and write detailed accounts of, for example, meal times in ancient Egypt. Pupils learn a good deal about the key features of the period including farming techniques and the animals that were kept for food and to do jobs.
133. The pupils' response to lessons is good, and their behaviour is very good. They work with interest and enthusiasm, co-operate well, and use and share resources sensibly.
134. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. In the only lesson observed, good links made with the pupils' own experience and with work in the literacy hour, increased the children's involvement and enjoyment. Pupils' attainment in history and geography is enhanced by the teachers' good use of the school, the local environment and by a number of visits to museums and places of interest.

## **Music**

135. The standards attained in music by the oldest pupils in both key stages are above those usually found.
136. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can follow a beat. All pupils sing the songs they have learned confidently and even the youngest pupils know the words of the songs sung during assemblies. Many of the older pupils at Key Stage 1 sing in tune. Pupils can follow a rhythm. They talk confidently about their personal responses to the pieces of music they listen to in lessons. They know that a conductor directs a band or orchestra.
137. Pupils at Key Stage 2 create rhythms using recognised beats, rests and sounds of their own. They can follow their own line from a score of six parts. They sing in parts, and are quick to learn songs with complex melodies and syncopated rhythms. They identify the instruments within pieces they listen to and can recognise new ones as they join. They reflect on how pieces of music make them feel, and talk about the colours they would use to paint an impression of the piece of music. They make comparisons between the music they listen to and the work of famous artists that they have studied, such as comparing the tranquillity of Delius's Aquarelle with the work of Monet, or the unexpected sequences of sounds of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring with the work of Picasso. Each summer term Year 6 pupils undertake a group composition project related to a piece of literature, where they work independently and then perform to their peers.

138. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 and sound progress at Key Stage 2. At both key stages, they make good progress in lessons, both in terms of composing and performing, and in listening and appraising music.
139. All pupils enjoy their music lessons and are keen to join in. They collaborate well and show an understanding of each other's performance. For example, they demonstrate awareness of the strong singers in their group, who they follow when singing parts.
140. The teaching of music is good. The school makes good use of a member of staff's expertise to teach music to the whole school. Lessons challenge pupils, both in the appraisal of music they listen to, and in elements of performance. The choice of songs taught excites pupils and the teacher makes good use of pupils' enthusiasm to promote high achievement.
141. The scheme of work provides a good balance of performing and appraising elements of the music curriculum. This has a beneficial effect on attainment. Assessment procedures are limited. However, the school has identified more extensive assessment as well as the use of information technology within the music programme as areas for development.
142. The school's good range of resources, which includes instruments from other cultures, such as miniature West Indian steel pans, an aboriginal rainstick and South American panpipes, significantly enhance the quality of learning and contribute effectively to pupils' cultural development.
143. The school runs a handbell group as well as a choir, and undertakes a range of productions each year. There are no opportunities for individual instrumental tuition at the moment, although plans to create a recorder group are at an advanced stage.

## **Physical education**

### *Swimming*

144. The inspection included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.
145. The school achieves good standards in swimming. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils reach and many exceed national expectations. They are able to swim unaided, competently and safely at least 25 metres. Most exceed this distance by a large margin. Pupils develop confidence in the water. They know how to rest, float and adopt support positions readily. For example, older pupils at Key Stage 2 were observed using plastic balls as floats in their practice for a personal survival award. Pupils can use a variety of means of propulsion using either arms or legs or both, and they develop effective and efficient swimming strokes on front and back. For example, most can swim all three major strokes, and those seen during the inspection had developed a fluent, efficient flutter kick, characterised by good use of the ankles. Pupils know the principles and skills of water safety and survival. Older pupils demonstrated a variety of survival skills during the inspection including swimming and treading water whilst clothed.
146. The quality of teaching is good, overall. It varies from very good to satisfactory. Features of teaching that contribute strongly to the standards achieved include the good position adopted by teachers when addressing the group, their good subject knowledge, and the high levels of physical activity required of pupils. The skilful management of pupils, high expectations and enthusiasm of those instructing and helping, also had a positive effect on the progress made in lessons.

147. A particularly effective aspect of the provision made by the school is the large number of parents who assist on the journey to the pool and during the swimming sessions. Ten parents helped during the swimming trip observed by inspectors. This brings great benefits to non-swimmers and those in need of increased support. Most of those who cannot yet swim receive one-to-one assistance from these adults.
148. The school has devised its own appropriate swimming programme and has drawn up a series of effective lesson plans to implement it. The amount of time allocated to swimming is much greater than that given in most schools. All pupils get weekly swimming instruction throughout their time at the school. The arrangements made for swimming provision are excellent. Regular assessments are made of pupils' progress. This is marked by the achievement of graded awards for competence.
149. Lessons take place in a local authority, heated pool. Pupils travel by bus and are instructed for about 30 minutes weekly. Two teachers from the school, and a local authority swimming instructor, teach groups of 20 or less. One of the teachers, assisted by parents, supervises changing.
150. The school makes appropriate provision to teach the different elements of the National Curriculum physical education programme, but other demands on inspectors' time meant that it was only possible to observe the teaching of swimming during the inspection.



## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

151. The inspection of Billingborough Primary School was carried out by a team of three inspectors, including a lay inspector. The team spent a total of seven inspector days in school. In addition to the 29 lessons or part lessons observed, school documentation was examined, assemblies and registration sessions were attended, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs was observed, interviews with governors and school staff were conducted and discussions held with groups and with individual pupils. The work of a representative sample of pupils was scrutinised and a selection of pupils was heard reading. The views of parents were gathered by means of a questionnaire and from a meeting called for that purpose.

### 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	87	0	18	19

#### Teachers and classes

##### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	3.80
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22.89

##### Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	49.4

**Average class size**

Average class size:

29
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## Financial data

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total income	140,750
Total expenditure	141,914
Expenditure per pupil	1,999
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,900
Balance carried forward to next year	2,736

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

60

Number of questionnaires returned:

20

### 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	45	55	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	65	35	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	30	55	5	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	45	50	5	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	45	40	15	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	55	40	5	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	45	45	5	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	55	35	10	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	50	45	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	45	50	5	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	75	25	0	0	0

Inspection evidence confirms the positive views held by parents.

[Not all the percentages in the table above will add to 100 because some parents did not respond to every question.]

### Other issues raised by parents

None.