

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HORNCastle COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Horncastle

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120507

Headteacher: Mr A H Craven

Reporting inspector: Mrs W Knight  
12172

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 190768

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bowl Alley Lane  
Horncastle  
Lincolnshire  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Smith

Date of previous inspection: October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs W Knight	Registered inspector	Music Science	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? - The school's results and achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs A Taylor	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr A Bond	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
Mr J Cox	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Geography History	
Dr H Mason	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs C Powell	Team inspector	Areas of learning for the under-fives Art Design and technology	
Mr R Salt	Team inspector	Information technology Mathematics	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a very large community primary school with an age range 3 - 11 and a roll of 475 with 52 part-time children in the nursery. It is located in a small country town with mixed housing west of the Lincolnshire Wolds, and also admits pupils from outlying rural communities. As the only primary school in town it is difficult to refuse admissions, so it is oversubscribed in five year groups. The nursery, on the other hand, has a defined admissions policy because there are insufficient places to meet demand.

Pupils come from a wide variety of homes. While some are from affluent families, there are also significant numbers of pupils from less prosperous rural backgrounds and a growing proportion of one-parent households. A below average percentage of pupils is known to be entitled to free school meals, but because there are no cooked meals, uptake from families who receive financial support is lower than might be expected. Pupils are predominantly white with just four of Bengali and Chinese origin. These four pupils have English as an additional language and are supported through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. There are 88 pupils on the register of special educational needs, many of whom have learning difficulties and a range of disabilities. Twelve of these have statements.

Attainment on entry according to baseline assessment is broadly in line with what is expected nationally.

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

This is a good school. It offers a stimulating learning environment for pupils and is effective in providing a relevant education. Under-fives attain good standards. Pupils achieve good standards in English and mathematics and sound standards in science, religious education and information technology at 7 and 11. The teaching is good overall with significant numbers of very good lessons. The governing body knows the school well and actively supports the headteacher. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is developing effective systems for evaluating the school's work. The school runs efficiently and provides good value for money.

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

- Provides good teaching which ensures all pupils make regular progress.
- Achieves high standards in mathematics as a result of good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Ensures pupils are competent writers for a range of purposes across the curriculum.
- Establishes positive and supportive relationships which promote very good behaviour amongst pupils and encourages them to be enthusiastic and conscientious learners.
- Offers very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities, especially in sport and music and including chances to take part in tournaments, festivals and competitions.
- Stimulates enthusiasm and excitement for history which results in good progress in knowledge and understanding of its importance.
- Gives a good start to early learning in the nursery.
- Includes and integrates pupils with special educational needs effectively.

### **What could be improved**

- Opportunities for pupils to develop their own learning, to take initiative and to accept responsibility.
- Planned provision for pupils to be creative and use their imagination, especially in art, dance and music.
- The consistency of marking so that pupils have regular information on how to improve.
- Further development of the co-ordination of subjects and under-fives provision to ensure provision is effectively monitored and evaluated.

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

The strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses. It has already identified a need to improve the consistency of marking and more assiduous co-ordination in its plans.

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

Since the last inspection in October 1996, the school has made satisfactory improvement and the action taken in response to the key issues in the last report has been successful in overcoming or improving most of the weaknesses identified.

Standards in information technology have improved significantly as a result of better provision and teaching. Provision for religious education has also improved. There are more resources, the curriculum includes work on different faiths and the teaching is better. More able pupils are set more challenging work in the majority of lessons. However, they are not often given responsibility for their own learning. Suitably demanding work is not always provided to ensure best progress in some subjects, especially geography and music.

The school development plan is now clear, with finance matched to priority areas. Clearer management roles, including the involvement of subject co-ordinators, have been established since the new headteacher took up his post. However, senior staff are not yet fully evaluating the provision for which they are responsible. Professional development is now regularly and actively provided for the school's current priority areas. Teaching is now good. Shortcomings in expectations, lack of clear objectives and the overuse of worksheets have been largely eliminated.

Curriculum planning is now done in an agreed way and schemes of work are used to ensure progression in most subjects. More able pupils are set more challenging work in the majority of lessons. However, they are not often given responsibility for their own learning. Suitably demanding work is not always consistently provided to ensure best progress in some subjects. Assessment procedures are now giving useful information about the attainment of under-fives and in English, mathematics and science, but not in other subjects. The information is used effectively in under-fives, English and mathematics. Day to day marking is sometimes good but practice is not consistent schoolwide.

Learning resources have been improved to an adequate level, but book provision is still limited despite considerable expenditure.



## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	B	B
Mathematics	B	C	B	B
Science	B	B	B	B

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average    E

The table shows that attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average compared with national scores and when compared with similar schools in 1999. The trend in improvement in the school's average points for core subjects is broadly in line with that found nationally. Boys and girls make similar progress. The school achieved the target levels set by the local education authority for 1999 in English and mathematics.

Inspection findings judge attainment to be above the national average in English and mathematics and in line with the average in science at both key stages. Standards in religious education and information technology are satisfactory. Steady progress is made by pupils in art, design and technology, geography and physical education and good progress is made in history, but in music progress is unsatisfactory. In view of their attainment on entry to the school, pupils generally achieve the levels which would be expected in most subjects and higher attaining pupils are also doing as well as they should.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are enthusiastic and most have very positive attitudes to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around the school and on the playground is very good. Pupils usually behave very well in lessons, even if work is occasionally undemanding or lacking in interest.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils can take initiative and accept responsibility. Relationships between pupils are very good as are those between pupils and adults.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils respond very well to the school's provision, and their enthusiastic, positive involvement is a strength of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 98% of the lessons seen during the inspection, the remaining 2% being unsatisfactory. Teaching was very good in 11% of lessons and good in 44%. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, has strengths as the result of good subject knowledge, but teaching of music has shortcomings because of teachers' lack of confidence in the subject. Basic skills are well developed across the curriculum. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and organise lessons efficiently. Effective questioning is used to help pupils to understand better, and judicious praise and encouragement further supports their learning. Appropriately challenging work is often set, and, although the same task is sometimes given to all the class, those pupils who have difficulties are well supported so that they can manage the work.

Pupils regularly increase their knowledge, develop skills and deepen their understanding across the curriculum. They can sustain concentration and often complete much work. Pupils readily practise and consolidate skills, responding positively to teachers' comments and praise. They often put in considerable intellectual and physical effort. Pupils regularly support each other, discussing ideas and making plans before carrying out tasks, but rarely take responsibility for their own learning or use their initiative.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Appropriately balanced despite a heavy focus on literacy and numeracy. Good community links. Very good extra-curricular opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils are well supported by adults in withdrawal groups and work in class is often also supported by extra input.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Class work is complemented by a visiting teacher. Support is appropriately provided in most lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good opportunities, with strengths in provision for moral and social development. Opportunities to be creative and imaginative in art, dance and music are limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils.

Good care is taken of pupils' welfare and safety. Information about events and on pupils' progress is satisfactory and effectively communicated to parents. The school has an effective partnership with parents and carers.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED?

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong leadership and has appropriate priorities. Co-ordinators are developing skills to enable them to monitor provision.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They actively support the school and check regularly on its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher knows areas in which improvements are needed and has effective strategies for handling any shortcomings as well as building on effective practice.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is suitably allocated to the school's priorities for development. Staff are appropriately used.

Although some class sizes are large, there are enough teachers. Other classroom staff are effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher provides purposeful management which is creating effective teamwork to improve the school further and he ensures that the available resources are used efficiently to give best value. There are adequate learning resources although book stocks in the library and for good readers are limited. The accommodation is satisfactory.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils' progress overall</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching</li> <li>• The school's leadership and management</li> <li>• The way the school helps pupils to become more mature and responsible</li> <li>• The programme of teaching in history and geography</li> <li>• Provision in the nursery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress made by higher attainers</li> <li>• Amount of homework set</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Information on pupils' progress</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the parents about all the strengths of the school but do not agree with parents about the range and number of extra-curricular clubs offered to pupils. They judge extra-curricular provision to be very good. The arrangements for setting homework during the inspection were reasonable. Information about pupils' progress is satisfactory although the school's recently established assessment procedures are not yet providing detailed records of all pupils' achievements which will be helpful to parents in due course. Higher attainers are often challenged but optimum progress is limited by there not being enough suitable books and restricted opportunities for independent learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1 The attainment of pupils under five has been maintained since the last inspection. Children under five reach standards that are above the expected level in language and literacy and mathematics by the time they reach statutory school age. They talk during role play, recite traditional rhymes with enjoyment and listen attentively to stories. They enjoy books, treat them with respect and talk about their favourite ones. Older children recognise familiar words, and write their own names and simple words and phrases. Children identify shapes; practise repeating patterns and count to fifty and beyond with the class teacher.

2 In personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development children reach standards that are in line with the levels expected for children by five. Children talk about past events and draw maps following visits. They investigate liquids, sprout potatoes, grow cress and identify household objects that use electricity. When looking at changes they cook cakes, rice, oats and prawn crackers. They use the computer to match, sequence and dress teddy. Children paint and print in many interesting ways and older children produce plant pictures using chalk and pencils. All children sing a wealth of songs and rhymes. Younger children play musical instruments freely while older ones accompany songs with them. Nursery children use many toys and apparatus to practise climbing and balancing. Reception children practise climbing, balancing and dancing in lessons in the hall. These judgements reflect similar findings to those of the previous inspection.

3 At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and higher levels in reading was close to the national average but below the average for similar schools. Standards dropped between 1996 and 1998 but rose in 1999 at the same pace as nationally. Most pupils in the current Year 2 read better than average seven-year-olds, showing an improvement in standards and good progress.

4 In writing standards reached at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 were below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools, although the percentage reaching higher levels was above the national average. The school has thus addressed the need to raise standards for more able pupils. Results fell in 1999 because of the number of pupils with special educational needs in that group. Boys performed better than girls in 1999 but there were more girls than boys on the special educational needs register in the tested group. Writing in the current Year 2 is in line with national averages.

5 Standards at Key Stage 2 have been maintained at a good level since the previous inspection. The attainment of most pupils in Year 6 is better than that of most eleven year olds and their progress is good. In national tests in 1999 the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was close to the national average and those reaching higher levels was well above. Compared with similar schools attainment is above average. The school's results were above average in all the four years 1996 to 1999. Girls in Year 6 did better than boys during this period as they did nationally. The school's results compare well with those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.

6 Standards in speaking and listening are good. In Year 2, pupils listen well and use information they hear to give very clear explanations using the correct technical terms. Pupils in Year 6 can listen attentively to each other in discussions and talk confidently in a range of situations. They consider their answers, clearly explain their opinions and ideas and express their arguments in discussion.

7 Most pupils are good readers by the age of 7. They read with expression and correct the few mistakes that they make. Pupils can talk about the parts of stories that they like and the authors they enjoy reading. Many pupils use alphabetical order to search for information and know how to use contents and index pages. Reading continues to be good by the age of eleven. Some pupils are avid readers and many are members of the local library. Higher attaining pupils have preferences for particular authors. Most pupils are accurate readers but some lower attainers make careless mistakes and do not realise that they are reading nonsense. Pupils read poetry with expression. Most pupils can research information by using the library classification system. They can scan texts to pick out the main points.

8 In writing by Year 2 pupils use precise vocabulary, learning to make their own glossaries of words. They write stories with a beginning, middle and end and use capital letters and full stops correctly. Higher attaining pupils start to use commas and begin to separate speech with speech marks. Handwriting by Year 2 is neat and joined. By the age of eleven writing is good. Pupils write for a variety of purposes including opportunities in other subjects. They produce autobiographies and biographies, applying these skills to work in history. They are aware of bias, can write expressively and catch the imagination of the reader and write different forms of poetry. Many pupils can spell difficult words.

9 In 1999 Key Stage 1 national tests in mathematics, standards of attainment were in line with those expected nationally although below those in similar schools. Inspection findings judge that by the age of 7 standards of attainment in mathematics are above those expected nationally. Pupils use repeated addition to understand multiplication and begin to learn tables, they can share groups of objects and use the division sign. Some high attainers understand multiplication and division as reverse processes. Pupils have good mental recall and can often explain their mental strategies.

10 At the end of Key Stage 2, the standards of attainment in national tests were above average compared with results nationally and those of similar schools, with the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 being well above the national average. By the age of 11 inspectors judge that standards are also above those expected nationally. Mentally, pupils use a variety of strategies to solve problems. Pupils have good understanding of the four number operations and begin to use fractions. They search for number patterns, make predictions and attempt to prove or disprove a hypothesis. Most pupils can use multiples and factors and understand inverse operations.

11 In Key Stage 2 national tests in science in 1999, standards in comparison with other schools are above the national average and above those for schools of a similar type. Inspection findings judge standards to be satisfactory at both key stages.

12 Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to construct simple electrical circuits, to predict and explain their reasons. They can communicate their findings by talking, using simple diagrams and writing sentences. They know the different part of the ear and how sound travels in waves through them. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of magnetism, gravity and other forces and use the correct scientific language to discuss work. They can follow instructions and measure with reasonable accuracy. Pupils investigate with confidence identifying factors that can be changed, recording results in tables, and offering hypotheses about unexpected results. They predict on the basis of previous knowledge and use scientific skills to evaluate their findings.

13 At the end of both key stages, attainment in information technology is broadly in line with national expectations which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Key Stage 1 pupils use the computer to type text, write instructions to program a travelling device and make simple bar charts. Key Stage 2 pupils combine text and graphics for their intended

audience, use spreadsheets to make calculations and access the Internet to support projects. Computers are not used sufficiently in English lessons, but work in design and technology, science, health education, geography and religious education is supported by information technology.

14 At the end of both key stages pupils generally attain standards in line with the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. They acquire a good knowledge of Christianity and other world religions and are beginning to understand that religious beliefs can be applied to everyone's lifestyle. Progress in learning art, geography and physical education is regular and steady throughout the school, and good progress is made in history and design and technology. High standards have been maintained in history since the last inspection. However, while progress in music is adequate at Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 pupils make insufficient progress particularly in composing and in appraising music, which means that the above average standards at the time of the previous inspection have not been maintained.

15 Higher attaining pupils, while not always achieving higher levels in Key Stage 1 tests, usually attain level 5 by the end of Year 6. Targets set for Year 6 pupils are generally appropriate. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets for their individual education plans with specialist teaching during the literacy hour and appropriate extra support. Pupils from homes where English is not the first language make sound progress, receiving additional teaching from a visiting specialist to complement the tasks set in school.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

16 Pupils enjoy attending school and this is shown in their positive attitudes, in the very good relationships that exist and in the very good behaviour pupils' exhibit. These are all important school strengths, which are helping pupils to learn well.

17 Year 5 pupils who took part in a Victorian day during the inspection typify these attributes. All dressed up in Victorian style clothes, their behaviour was impeccable (although perhaps the threat of the cane was influential!) and the atmosphere in class was electric as pupils sat in rows, with hands on the desk, their palms flat. They answered 'Sir, 36 Sir' to the school master's questions to establish if the six times table had been learnt properly. This kind of event, where history is brought alive, is held each year and younger pupils eagerly anticipate the time when it will be their turn to take part.

18 Pupils are naturally well behaved and very polite. They hold doors open for visitors and are eager to help with directions to classrooms and general assistance. They will offer to escort visitors to classrooms if directions fail. They are friendly to talk to and respond pleasantly. Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school. There have been two temporary exclusions over the past academic year. In conversation with inspectors, pupils felt that there is little bullying or oppressive behaviour in the school. They said that generally, the playground is a happy place to be, although they would appreciate more playground equipment. Inspectors endorse pupils' positive views about the absence of oppressive behaviour.

19 The school is a well ordered place where routines are clearly understood and fully accepted. For instance, movement between classes to the design and technology building or between classrooms and physical education in the hall takes place in a quiet, well-ordered fashion. There is little time wasted in school and pupils are quick to settle to their work. They are enthusiastic learners: there was a gasp of anticipation when the teacher revealed word blends (using 'ph' and 'ch' as in the names 'Christopher' and 'Sophie') that the children were to work on. Very often, the teacher will explain what the focus of the next day's lessons will be; for instance, to work on their own poems about Ten Torrid Tudors. Here, pupils all said

"Yes!" with obvious enthusiasm as they eagerly anticipated the task ahead. When asked by inspectors about the best thing in the school, many said how much they enjoyed their mathematics lessons.

20 Pupils are thoughtful and sensitive to the needs of others. For instance, when looking at a range of dictionaries with their teacher during the literacy session, pupils were quick to identify the book they thought would be suitable for one of their peers. Those pupils who have special educational needs are well integrated into school life and given appropriate respect and consideration. During a discussion in religious education, older pupils showed themselves to be mature and thoughtful when they identified parents, family and teachers as key figures in their lives, expressing some perceptive comments about the relative importance of sports and film 'stars'.

21 Pupils show themselves capable of much more responsibility than they are actually given. They respond well to the more limited opportunities designed to enhance their personal development. Jobs around the classroom, often undertaken before school starts in the morning and before afternoon school, are carried out responsibly. For older pupils, posts of responsibility such as the chance to be sports captains, to prepare the hall for assembly, or be music monitors are carried out well. Older pupils occasionally show initiative in starting up clubs, such as for chess, and there are usually pupils who organise Blue Peter bring and buy sales each year to raise money for others.

22 When given tasks to do at home, pupils work independently and homework is usually conscientiously done, with spelling and tables learnt. Of particular note is the work carried out at home by Year 5 pupils who have researched family trees and produced some stunning biographies of friends and family. The opportunities for pupils to work independently in lessons, and use the school library for their own research, are limited.

23 The school's attendance figure is good and it is above the average for primary schools nationally. This good level of attendance has been successfully maintained since the last inspection. There is no unauthorised absence. This is due to the high degree of parental co-operation in letting the school know reasons why pupils are absent from school. Most pupils are regularly punctual.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

24 Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 99% per cent of lessons, of which 44% is good and 11% very good. Unsatisfactory teaching is rare, just two of the lessons observed, and accounted for by lack of confidence in teaching music. Teaching is particularly good in the current Years 2 and 5 where standards are consistently high. The quality of teaching has a direct effect on pupils' learning. Good quality teaching enhances levels of pupils' attainment in lessons and a well designed range of learning opportunities.

25 For the children under five teaching is good overall. Planning is well matched to the areas of learning and beyond, appropriate for children of this age. Lessons contain an appropriate balance of activities although opportunities are sometimes missed for children to experiment, investigate or explore, especially in the reception classes. Day to day assessment by teachers and support staff is very good particularly in the nursery where observations of children make a significant contribution. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are enabled to make good progress with well focused support and good assessments of pupils' needs. The needs of the more able children are also effectively met through organised groupings in literacy and numeracy for the older children under five.

26 Teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 generally have good subject knowledge and understand the capabilities of the age group they are teaching. In English and mathematics particularly, teachers have a good grasp of the subject matter, and use accurate terminology in their descriptions. This enhances pupils' own knowledge and develops understanding. Teachers provide ample structured opportunities for pupils to acquire and consolidate their skills. This is well demonstrated in a Year 5 English lesson when the teacher skilfully uses her own subject knowledge of the text *Stig of the Dump* to develop pupils' understanding of how to build mystery and suspense in writing. The introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has improved teachers' confidence and basic knowledge of these subjects. In history, teachers' subject knowledge is particularly good. They transmit their own enthusiasm for the subject and stimulate pupils to ask questions and sustain interest.

27 The basic skills are taught well across the curriculum. In Year 1 the teacher draws pupils' attention to the letter blends at the beginning and end of words and encourages pupils to think of others to add to the class list. In a Year 2 religious education lesson the teacher reinforces learning by pointing out the need for capital letters and full stops to demarcate sentences. In science, the importance of accurate measurement is stressed in a Year 5 lesson when investigating air resistance. Pupils acquire the basic skills and use them successfully to further their learning. Word processing skills in information technology are taught effectively across a range of subjects.

28 Teachers' planning is largely effective. In the most successful lessons the lesson objective is explained to pupils and this gives them a clear indication of what they are required to do to improve their own learning. In less successful lessons planning is not detailed and expected outcomes are less clearly defined.

29 Expectations of good behaviour and commitment to work are a strong feature of many lessons. Challenging tasks are often set by teachers, which inspires pupils to apply their intellectual and physical effort. A good example is the use of quick fire question and answer sessions in the introductory mental mathematics sessions. This is shown in a Year 6 upper set lesson when pupils solve real life money problems. However, teachers do not always develop pupils' creative skills successfully. In music, art and dance lessons, too few opportunities exist for pupils to express their own feelings. In a Year 3 music lesson, although the pupils are introduced to appropriate technical knowledge, they do not experiment with rhythm or create music themselves.

30 Teachers employ suitable teaching strategies in lessons. Teachers use questioning techniques particularly well, posing well-chosen questions to draw out pupils' knowledge and ascertain their levels of understanding. Pupils are encouraged to give well constructed answers to questions. In a Year 5 religious education lesson the teacher's phrasing is cleverly worded, beginning with where, what and how when asking pupils to describe a scene in the holy city of Mecca. Teachers generally match tasks well to pupils' ability levels, especially in mathematics and English lessons. This ensures appropriate progress is made. In some subjects only one task is given for the whole class. This does not always address the whole range of pupils' attainment levels. Teachers, however, support the lower attaining pupils well either by allocating learning support assistance to a group or giving additional support themselves. The majority of pupils act maturely and responsibly in school but teachers do not always capitalise on these characteristics in order to encourage initiative so that they can take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils are often constrained by a fairly rigid lesson framework that does not allow independence or collaborative activities, such as role-play. Teachers use the last few minutes of lessons very effectively to consolidate learning objectives through a plenary session. There are good examples of this practice in many subjects but particularly in mathematics and English.



31 The management of pupils in lessons is good. This is a strength of the school's teaching provision and ensures good learning. Pupils retain concentration and commitment, and produce a good volume of work through good teacher management strategies. Praise and encouragement are used effectively to promote pupils' self esteem and spur pupils to higher performance levels. This is demonstrated successfully in a Year 4 gymnastics lesson when challenging tasks are set and pupils commit themselves to high levels of energy. The teacher encourages a more adventurous approach but when asked to stop, pupils stop immediately.

32 Teachers use learning resources well to enliven lessons and support staff are deployed effectively to support pupils. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson the learning support assistant teaches a small group of pupils multiplication. Pupils respond well following instructions and improve their skills. In a successful Year 2 art lesson a range of fabrics and crayons are used to expand pupils' experiences and stimulate their interest in design. However, the pace of lessons can sometimes be slow. In Key Stage 1 physical education lessons considerable amounts of time are lost in setting out the apparatus, with pupils queuing alongside equipment waiting patiently for their particular opportunity to perform. When lessons have slow pace and pupils receive little stimulation from teachers, they quite naturally lose interest and do not perform to their optimum level. This is often the case when teacher introductions are overlong and pupils sit for a considerable time on the carpet.

33 Teachers assess pupils' work conscientiously. Books are marked regularly and positive comments give pupils encouragement. Marking procedures are not standardised however, and there is much variation in teachers' approaches. Too few teachers give pupils specific targets on how they might improve their future work. The school rightly recognises this as an area for development. Some parents express disappointment with the marking in topic work, which they say does not give prompt recognition to the amount of time and effort pupils take. This is often where pupils complete work ahead of a deadline.

34 In lessons teachers circulate around the room while pupils complete tasks and gain a good informal understanding of pupils' progress. There are many good examples of profitable teacher intervention, as in a Year 4 science lesson. Pupils discover and identify creatures and their teacher refers pupils to information books, in order to check animal habitats.

35 The use of homework enhances pupils' learning particularly in mathematics, English and information technology. Pupils read books at home regularly and practise mathematics skills. Teachers give a clear message about the importance of homework to improve learning.

36 Specialist teaching during the literacy hour and the appropriate extra support provided for pupils with special educational needs ensures pupils regularly learn and consolidate essential skills. Teachers make every effort to make sure that work is well matched to the pupils' needs. Appropriate targets are set within the individual educational plans and pupils with a range of additional needs are helped well by learning support assistants and by the special needs co-ordinator. Most teachers either provide modified tasks which take account of all these pupils' difficulties in reading or writing, or spend time early in lessons ensuring such pupils understand what is expected. Additional teaching from a visiting specialist to complement the tasks set in school ensures pupils from homes where English is not the first language are able to make progress.

37 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 1. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen to just 1%. Many issues, such as low expectations and lack of clarity in lesson objectives, have been addressed successfully, and the use of worksheets has been reduced to a more reasonable level

except in science and geography. However, marking, although no longer superficial, does still lack consistency of approach and feedback to pupils is too general.

38 The format of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has made a very positive impact on the style and quality of teaching in the school in all subjects.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

39 Children enter the nursery at the beginning of the year in which they are four and transfer to the reception class the following year. Their curriculum relates well to the six areas of learning for children of this age and is closely linked to National Curriculum work. Children are given many opportunities to develop through a balance of structured and free play activities especially in the nursery. In the reception classes children are not always given enough opportunities to develop their own learning, take the initiative or accept responsibility.

40 Curriculum planning and organisation in the nursery is very good. Priority is given to those children who may have special educational needs and these and other children benefit from their experiences and are well prepared for their move into the reception class. Parents appreciate the progress their child makes. The curriculum for the under-fives in the reception classes has been strengthened since the last inspection and pupils are making good progress. The planned activities take account of the areas of learning and aspects of the daily literacy and numeracy hour have been effectively introduced.

41 The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2, which is broad and balanced, provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities for all pupils. The subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Since the last inspection, the school has addressed the weaknesses concerning the provision for information technology, design technology and art. A new information and communication technology (ICT) suite has recently been opened and the school is part of the National Grid For Learning. Pupils are now beginning to enjoy the opportunities to use ICT to support their learning across the curriculum. More effective curriculum planning and monitoring provides better coverage of all subjects. Prominence is given to numeracy and literacy and the introduction of the national strategies, which have been effectively introduced across the school, have had a positive effect in raising standards across the curriculum.

42 There is an appropriate time allocated to all subjects, although it is not always judiciously timetabled, and the curriculum successfully promotes the personal, intellectual and physical development of the pupils. Personal and social education, including drugs awareness, health and sex education are taught as part of the science curriculum, during religious education lessons or as part of class assemblies. Opportunities for intellectual development have been enhanced by the provision of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in many subjects. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils confidently draw upon local original sources of information to use the support their project work in geography and history on Horncastle and World War 1.

43 Policies and schemes of work are in place for most subjects of the curriculum. Several are based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but in some subject areas programmes are developed to integrate and work alongside the national guidelines. All pupils have full access to the curriculum although the impact of withdrawal of pupils from lessons for music lessons and for reading sessions taken by volunteers sometimes disrupts their learning in individual lessons. Similarly, consideration needs to be given to the use of stereotyping when discussing activities with pupils, for instance assuming that all girls will want to choose dolls and boys tractors to play with or that Tudor models

have to be the same sex as the child.

44 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is highly satisfactory and they are making good progress, while children who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. They all benefit from small group, intense work in literacy and numeracy. The previous inspection report indicated that more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged. Such pupils are now identified at an early stage and are provided with opportunities to develop their learning within lesson planning in the majority of lessons.

45 A strength of the school is the range and quality of extra-curricular activities it provides for the pupils. There is a wide range of competitive sports, for example netball, cricket, football and cross-country running, and association with local sporting clubs has enhanced performance. Other pupils enjoy archery and younger children maypole dancing. The school choir has competed successfully in local competitions and many younger pupils are enjoying learning to play the recorder. The school welcomes a wide number of visitors to enrich curricular opportunities. For example, the school nurse has a positive impact upon pupil's personal, health and social education programme, whilst local clergy assist with religious education. A wide variety of educational visits to support the curriculum are arranged to places such as museums, art galleries, Grimsby docks and Lincoln Cathedral. Year 4 pupils enjoy a long weekend visit to London and Year 6 pupils stay for a week at a field study centre. The school grounds and the town itself are used effectively across the curriculum. All these activities make a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development as well as their learning in subjects.

46 The school has good links with the local community to support curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, personal and social development. Pupils were involved in the Horncastle Civic Trust and played an active part in the production of the *Horncastle Then and Now* publications. There are firm links with a nearby school for pupils with special education needs and with the secondary feeder schools. Many of the older pupils in these schools work within the school as part of their work experience. The induction programme for transition to secondary school is appropriate and pupils are well prepared for this next stage of their education.

47 The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good which shows some improvement since the last inspection. The ethos of the school focuses around provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils and it is transmitted through the good relationships within the community of the school.

48 The main source of spiritual development is collective acts of worship and the teaching in religious education. Acts of worship are well planned, although not all class assemblies fulfil statutory requirements. Collective worship is mainly of a broadly Christian character but also features stories from other beliefs. The good behaviour of pupils as they enter and leave the assembly hall creates the right atmosphere for reflection. Pupils listen attentively and are given opportunities to reflect on the spiritual and moral themes presented to them by teachers and outside visitors. The curriculum for religious knowledge has improved and deals well with the rules, beliefs, lifestyles and ceremonies that characterise Christian and other faiths. At Key Stage 1, however, skills are less well developed than knowledge and at Key Stage 2 there are limited opportunities for independent work. Spiritual development is also promoted within other subjects of the curriculum but this lacks consistency and is very dependent on individual teachers and the opportunities presented by their subjects.

49 Pupils are made aware of their responsibility to each other and the community and they respond well to the codes of behaviour promoted by the staff. Assembly themes and life stories of famous people reinforce moral issues but the most effective influence is provided

by the positive relationships between teachers and pupils.

50 The school engenders a strong community spirit, which begins with the positive social setting of the nursery and continues through the key stages. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities for the older pupils to attend, though the provision at Key Stage 1 is limited. The residential trips for pupils in Years 4 and 6 provide an additional social experience. Pupils are expected to be polite, self-disciplined and show respect for adults and the property of others. They consequently show respect for their peers and demonstrate sound collaborative skills, particularly in science and information technology. There are opportunities for older pupils to help in assembly and support younger pupils in paired reading. They respond well to responsibility but the potential for allowing pupils to show initiative is not fully exploited.

51 Pupils gain knowledge of the beliefs, festivals and music of other cultures in assembly and also in geography, history and religious education lessons. The attractive corridor displays of pupils work on other cultures serve to emphasise the importance of cultural development. Visits to museums and art galleries also support cultural investigations and the school makes effective use of the locality in enhancing history projects. Visits from musicians, artists and theatre groups enrich the curriculum and present the pupils with models of good practice.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

52 Overall, there are good procedures in place, which are supporting pupils' care and welfare. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is providing pupils with a supportive atmosphere, with an appropriate emphasis on academic achievement, where teaching and learning is flourishing.

53 The school's arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and the designated person with responsibility for this has an appropriate level of understanding. In view of the size of the school and its split site, the training of a second named person to fulfil this role is a minor area for development. Governors have a good understanding of health and safety procedures and some are especially skilled in this area. As a result, health and safety issues are checked carefully, with governors taking a proactive approach and the school's policy has been recently updated.

54 Staff have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils respond very well to this. Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school. The behaviour policy provides staff with an appropriate level of guidance. Pupils are happy there is very little oppressive behaviour or bullying and they are confident that staff listen to them if they have a concern. Staff know their pupils well; for instance in an religious education lesson about important figures in pupils' lives, when a pupil could not think of a person to write about, the teacher suggested the pupil's grandfather, whom she knew was very influential in her life.

55 The school has good attendance rates and there are appropriate procedures in place to check on any pupils who are absent from school without reason. There is liaison with the Education Welfare Officer where appropriate. However, in most cases, the headteacher telephones families to find out what is happening and to remind them of the importance of regular attendance.

56 The school now has adequate systems in place for assessing pupils' work in mathematics, English and science and for children who are under five. It uses the information gained satisfactorily in planning the future curriculum in provision for under-fives, literacy and numeracy. The school has appointed an assessment co-ordinator who has a secure grasp of whole-school procedures. Satisfactory progress has been made on

developing assessment procedures since the previous inspection. Much of this has taken place over the past year, following training courses attended by the headteacher and assessment co-ordinator and the introduction of a new assessment policy.

57 Assessment procedures are very good for children under five. Informal assessment following admission to the nursery is carried out and teachers carry out a baseline assessment within the first few weeks of a pupil entering the reception class. This information is used effectively to identify needs and plan the curriculum. Various assessments are well documented and used to identify individual children's needs.

58 The school has also appropriately introduced reading tests for Year 1 pupils, reading and spelling tests for pupils from Year 2 upwards and non-statutory national tests for pupils in Years 3 to 5. These are all used satisfactorily in planning class work and in helping to identify pupil progress, although individual teachers' use is not always consistent. In science, records of skills acquired form the basis of tracking progress against National Curriculum targets but are not consistently used to ensure pupils' strengths and weaknesses are identified and used in lessons. The use of assessment in information technology is very new and a good assessment document is currently being introduced to staff. It is too early to judge its effectiveness in raising standards in information technology. There is currently no assessment in religious education or in the remaining National Curriculum subjects.

59 The headteacher and governing body make good use of assessment data, including National Curriculum test results, to consider trends in performance. The assessment co-ordinator has identified his involvement in analysing whole-school data, as an area for development, which is appropriate. Assessment results are starting to be used to detect gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding so that they may be remedied. For example, the performance of the current Year 4 in reading was noticeably lower than their Key Stage 1 national test results, although it was higher in mathematics. A considerable amount of new reading books were introduced as a result, to challenge more able readers and improve their reading skills. This is having a beneficial effect upon standards. Yearly reports to parents are clearly written and identify specific areas for improvement.

60 Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately assessed and the information is used to identify the targets identified in their individual education plans. Targets are regularly reviewed and pupils' progress is appropriately monitored.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

61 Parents are very supportive of the school and hold it in high regard. They especially acknowledge the improvements made since the headteacher took up his post. They agree that staff are welcoming and approachable and there are good informal opportunities to see them at the beginning and end of the day. Parents at the meeting said minor problems are quickly sorted by the headteacher, who 'troubleshoots' before they start to escalate.

62 There was a good response to the Ofsted questionnaire with parents giving positive replies to most aspects of the school's work. At the pre-inspection meeting parents were also generally positive in their views and support for the school. Parents particularly feel that the support for pupils with special educational needs has improved recently and the inspection team confirms a sound standard of provision overall, with good provision for children who are under five.

63 There are many effective links with parents which are helping the home and school partnership. The quality of information about the school is good overall. The governors' annual report is a polished document which gives parents a clear insight into the management issues the school has faced and is facing. It reflects well the very good

leadership the governors provide. Newsletters from the headteacher are useful in keeping parents up to date with everyday news and events. There is a good range of opportunities for parents to visit school to find out what is actually being taught, from informal coffee mornings with presentations about current issues such as the teaching of numeracy, to open days when parents can see their child at work.

64 There is little organised information for parents about the work pupils are currently studying, or advice about ways in which parents can support at home. Some teachers do place information on outside doors and parents have been told about the school's policy on homework. The provision of a whole-school approach to providing information about current work and ways parents can help at home, is an area for development of which the school is aware.

65 Pupils' annual reports are sufficiently detailed and provide parents with a clear idea about how much their child has progressed over the year. They also include useful targets for parent and child to work on; last years targets included 'to develop more confidence in reading aloud' and 'to work on developing more complex sentences'. This is a good way to encourage a joint approach to pupils' improvement.

66 The level of impact parents have on the work of the school is of a sound quality. The Parent Teacher Association works hard to raise money for items the school would otherwise be unable to afford. Recent purchases, using money raised at the annual duck race on the nearby River Bain plus other regular events, include shelves and equipment for the library with further money earmarked for a public address system. A significant group of parents provide regular and experienced help in classrooms, more especially at Key Stage 1. They provide extra adult support for activities such as reading, work on the computers and practical activities like cookery. Their presence is making a considerable difference to the quality of education the school is providing in Key Stage 1.

67 Parents provide a good level of support for learning at school and at home. The level of detail in some of the Victorian costumes, many specially made for the event, showed an impressive level of parental as well as pupil commitment in bringing together both costumes and artefacts. There were rumours of authentic home made bread and home made lemonade in one or two packed lunches! The vast majority of parents listen to their child read regularly and help them with learning spellings and tables and with research for project work. Attendance is very good at parents' evenings and most parents are actively interested in their child's education and in ways they can help.

68 There are very good relationships with the nearby playgroup although not all these children transfer to the nursery, due to the limited places available. Parents value the nursery and are very supportive in the sensitive way in which children transfer both into the nursery and into school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

69 The headteacher, who has only been in post for 15 months, provides strong leadership and effective management. He has already been responsible for many initiatives, including beginning to institute procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work, which are well focussed on further improving standards. The staff and parents have confidence in his leadership and teachers are well motivated to effect changes. Because of financial constraints, there is no deputy head and the headteacher has recently established a management team that has started to provide appropriate support to agreed initiatives. This has the disadvantage that there is no deputy to effectively challenge proposals or provide additional ideas during the formulation of future intentions.

70 Co-ordinators are gradually being provided with strategies for evaluating provision and some have had the opportunity to observe classroom practice. The headteacher has started to monitor teaching and to set challenging targets for individual teachers to enhance their classroom practice. He is well aware of teachers' strengths in the classroom and in their leadership potential and deploys them suitably to provide effective teams. Although formal appraisal arrangements have been suspended on the advice of the local education authority pending revised national arrangements, professional interviews are being held and the information from such discussions is used to plan training. In-service training opportunities have improved since the last inspection, with attendance on courses being appropriately matched to school development plan targets, but some co-ordinators with responsibilities which are not immediate priorities have not been able to go on relevant training.

71 At the present time there is no individual co-ordinator for children under five, with the responsibility being shared by the early years team although a co-ordinator has been appointed for September. Some inconsistencies between the under-fives classes show that as there is no individual co-ordinator to monitor, evaluate and lead this early learning stage, the curriculum is not yet fully established and coherent and some assessment procedures are too complex.

72 The school development plan has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to have many shortcomings. It now consists of clearly stated targets which are appropriately costed, criteria are given for success and a member of the governing body is responsible for overseeing the achievement of each target. The governing body is equally accountable for and supportive of other developments and ensures that all statutory requirements are met, except ensuring that all class assemblies are acts of worship. Many are actively involved in school, and are able to produce an informative annual report which provides a useful picture of the school's latest achievements. Governors have also set appropriately demanding targets for the headteacher, and have clear expectations of how the school will progress over the next few years.

73 The governing body is also well involved in the financial management of the school, being updated on the budget at regular intervals and making decisions about expenditure on the basis of good information about the projected effects of any proposals. Specific grants are appropriately used, suitable procedures are in operation to ensure administration is efficient and information technology is deployed to provide relevant figures for consideration at meetings. There has been no audit in recent years. When making decisions on expenditure, care is taken to ensure goods or services give best value by investigating a range of alternatives before ordering or agreeing continued provision. The school has substantially improved the building recently; for instance the outside area for nursery children is exciting and stimulating and relates to all areas of learning. However, some enhanced areas, particularly the library, information technology suite and this under-fives play area are not fully utilised throughout the timetabled week.

74 There are sufficient, appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and suitably experienced support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, both Year 6 classes, the mixed Year 3 and 4 class and the Year 4 class are large, with over thirty pupils in each class which adversely affects the time given to individual pupils. Curriculum responsibilities are appropriately shared between teachers from both key stages and one teacher has responsibility for co-ordinating special educational needs. They have a clear understanding of their roles, work well as a team and receive regular training to allow them to meet new national initiatives and to update their skills and knowledge. Good use is made of a visiting teacher to help pupils whose first language is not English and visiting teachers give pupils tuition with musical instruments.

75 The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Neither of the halls will accommodate the whole school comfortably and one Year 2 class is currently housed in a temporary classroom. However, the former kitchen is useful as a design and technology building. Spacious, attractive grounds include areas which enhance the teaching of science and physical education, although the grassed area is small for organised games. There is an attractive library equipped with new furniture at a suitable height for pupils. However, the library is used as a teaching area for pupils receiving extra help with English for large periods of the week and this prevents it from being used to teach research skills and to allow pupils to carry out independent study. The new information and communications technology suite is a useful addition to the school's facilities and improves the provision for information technology, which was judged unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Displays of work in corridors and classrooms are carefully mounted. They show off pupils' work to good advantage and help to create a stimulating environment. Internally, the building is spotlessly clean and the caretaker maintains it to a high standard. Although there is a secure area for nursery children, there is no separate area allocated for children under five in reception.

76 Learning resources have been improved since the last inspection with considerable expenditure on computer equipment and books. Overall provision is adequate, but book stocks are still limited, particularly in the library where there are insufficient information books in some subject areas and some of the books, particularly the encyclopaedias, are out of date. There are also too few texts suitable for some reception children and higher attainers in Key Stage 2, which adversely affects pupils' opportunities for personal study and reading for enjoyment at a level which challenges their skills. The school has few artefacts of its own for history. Nevertheless, teachers make good use of the museum loans service and items borrowed from staff and parents to improve pupils understanding. There are good resources for religious education, information technology, art and design technology.



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

77 In order to raise standards and improve provision, the school should:

### **Provide opportunities for pupils to develop their own learning by:**

actively encouraging them to make choices and take initiative;  
offering more opportunities for them to take responsibility including schoolwide tasks for older pupils;  
consistently planning work in which they judge their own and others' efforts;  
ensuring they apply research skills using reference books and information technology regularly;  
encouraging collaboration in a wider range of tasks across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs: 21, 22, 25, 30, 39, 82, 86, 96, 114, 127, 159, 168)

### **Plan more effective provision for pupils to be creative and use their imagination, especially in art, dance and music by:**

increasing teachers' confidence in teaching these subjects;  
producing and using a coherent, progressive programme for music;  
enhancing opportunities for expressing feelings and using imagination;  
offering choices in resources and media.

(Paragraphs: 14, 24, 29, 71, 95, 98, 131, 132, 137, 154 - 157, 160, 162)

### **Improve the consistency of marking and feedback to provide pupils with regular information on how to improve by:**

adopting and following agreed schoolwide marking and feedback procedures, including the use of reading records;  
extending the practice of jointly involving pupils, parents and teachers in setting the targets to be achieved next.

(Paragraphs: 33, 37, 58, 62, 109, 111, 119, 126, 131, 141, 147, 156, 167)

### **Further develop the co-ordination of subjects and under-fives provision to ensure provision is effectively monitored and evaluated by:**

focussing on consistency of practice within the subject or phase;  
extending the monitoring of teaching;  
using assessment information more rigorously.

(Paragraphs: 39, 70, 71, 74, 114, 127, 131, 148, 164)

The headteacher and governors should also consider the following minor issues:

### **How to make best use of the library, ICT suite and under-fives area.**

(Paragraphs: 73, 75, 97, 114, 123, 127, 130, 151, 153)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	133
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	44	44	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	475
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		88

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	40
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	42

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	41	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	36	38
	Girls	23	22	26
	Total	59	58	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (82)	83 (91)	91 (90)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	37	39	39
	Girls	23	26	27
	Total	60	65	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (89)	93 (93)	94 (93)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	38	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	31
	Girls	27	27	30
	Total	55	54	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (70)	75 (64)	85 (70)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	32	35
	Girls	28	29	30
	Total	59	61	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (62)	85 (71)	90 (70)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	1
White	
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	29.5

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	115

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-9
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	£
Total income	707800
Total expenditure	730760
Expenditure per pupil	1523
Balance brought forward from previous year	62700
Balance carried forward to next year	39740

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	501
Number of questionnaires returned	278

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	57	3	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	42	9	2	6
The teaching is good.	62	36	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	47	14	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	33	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	0	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	47	12	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	55	41	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	38	11	2	15
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	44	3	0	3

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

78 Children are admitted to the nursery in the September of the year in which they are four and transfer to the reception classes in the September of the year they are five. At the time of the inspection there were 52 children in the nursery class attending part-time and 71 children in the two reception classes and one mixed reception and year 1 class. Most children transfer to the nursery from a local playgroup, with which there are good links. The nursery induction programme helps children feel secure on entering school, and includes a useful booklet for parents, visits to school and a meeting for parents. Parents, grandparents and friends are involved in children's learning by helping in lessons in both the nursery and the reception classes.

79 Assessment of children's competence indicates that children enter the reception year with standards which are in line with those expected for children of this age. Learning for children under five is good in mathematics, language and literacy and by the time they are five they reach standards that are above the expected level. In personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development, learning is satisfactory and children reach standards that are in line with the levels expected for children by five. These judgements reflect the findings of the previous inspection. Learning for children with special educational needs and English as a second language is good, with these children being well provided for. Nursery nurses and educational support staff play an important role in the learning of all children in both the nursery and reception classes.

#### **Personal and social development.**

80 All children behave very well, concentrate and work happily with their friends. In the nursery, they take turns in the garden when riding their bikes and share their food at snack time, paying good attention to saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Children in the nursery show independence in selecting an activity and help to tidy up at the end of a session. All children have the opportunity to select from prepared activities that are planned around termly themes. Children in the reception class dress and undress independently for their physical education lessons, and in the nursery when dressing up for their role-play activities. In the reception classes children behave very well in lessons. They concentrate and listen to their teachers, even when literacy sessions are too long. Children appreciate and respond to other cultures when learning about the Chinese New Year, food and customs.

81 By the age of five children are attaining standards in personal and social development that are in line with those found nationally and make sound progress.

82 The teaching of personal and social development is sound and promotes good levels of behaviour both in and out of the classroom. Children are able to concentrate on their work and are eager to learn. However, children do not all benefit from an organisation that encourages initiative and responsibility.

#### **Language and literacy**

83 Children in the nursery have opportunities to chat in the role-play cafe, and when involved in the varied activities for small and large groups. They chant the days of the week, sing the alphabet song and recite many of the traditional nursery rhymes with obvious enjoyment. The busy garden area makes a significant contribution to children's language development. The reception children listen to stories in their literacy groups such as

*Suddenly* and join in with weather rhymes.

84 All children enjoy books and treat them with respect. Children in the nursery have ample opportunities to select books and are able to talk about their favourite stories and respond well to humour. Older children are learning letters of the alphabet and know the title, author and illustrator of books shared in literacy sessions. More able children understand alliteration when associating letter 'g' sounds. They recognise many familiar words, reading the first levels of their reading books confidently.

85 In the nursery children trace and draw, linking their pictures to the Gingerbread Boy story. Many children can recognise and write their own name. Reception children write their own names and are developing good pencil control, forming their letters correctly. Children are able to write simple words and phrases in their writing books, many without support. They form a list of animals in Noah's Ark and use capital letters and full stops with understanding. By the age of five children reach standards in language and literacy that are above the level found nationally and make good progress.

86 The teaching of language and literacy is good overall. Work is planned carefully incorporating both the national targets for the under-fives and the literacy strategy, providing well for all children. In the best lessons teachers are imaginative, and use interesting methods to encourage children to listen and participate in lessons. They ask questions, giving children time to answer. However, for older children under five, there are limited opportunities to initiate ideas leading to a more independent approach and extended learning. Support staff make a good contribution to language and literacy sessions.

## **Mathematics**

87 Nursery children play games which develop their mathematical understanding. They identify shapes and use them in model making, as well as a shape recognition game in physical education. Children count to fifty and beyond as a group with the class teacher. They recognise colours and use the language of mathematics confidently. Older children count forward and backwards in mental mathematics sessions, using addition and subtraction, helped by number rhymes. They practise repeating patterns both practically and through recording them, recognising pattern in everyday objects. By the age of five children reach standards in mathematics that are above the level found nationally and they make good progress.

88 The teaching of mathematics is good overall. Children are appropriately taught as a class or in small groups. Staff, especially in the reception classes, ask good questions which build on the children's previous experiences. All teachers focus well on the teaching of mathematical concepts, using praise to encourage all groups of children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

89 Younger children consider the passing of time when looking at old vehicles and aeroplanes, comparing them with those of today in their theme of movement and energy. Older children know that Pocahontas lived a long time ago, looking at old clothes and comparing them with their own. Children talk about yesterday and last week as they talk about past events in their lives.

90 Younger children talk about other countries of the world when looking at balloons in flight and children in the reception classes draw maps following their farm visit, identifying the main features.

91 In science there are many varied activities. Nursery children investigate to see how liquids behave in painting and water play activities. They sprout potatoes and grow cress, understanding the need for water. Reception children are able to identify a range of household objects needing electricity in order to work and experiment with a range of electrical resources to make a bulb light up. When looking at changes in materials they cook cakes, understanding the difference between cooked and uncooked food.

92 Nursery children use a microwave to watch the changes that take place when they cook rice, oats, prawn crackers and cakes. They operate the computer as they dress teddy. Reception children explore machines that need batteries to work and use the computer in their mathematical focus on matching and sequencing shapes. Children make sound progress and by the age of five they reach the expected standards for five year olds in knowledge and understanding.

93 The teaching in all areas of knowledge and understanding of the world is sound. Children have access to a good range of resources and visits which enhance this area of learning. Parents and support staff play an important role in this area of learning.

### **Creative development**

94 In the nursery and reception classes children use different media to create attractive displays. Nursery children paint in a variety of ways. They paint with their fingers on tables and make a print of their picture. They dip tea bags and balloons into paint and drop them onto paper with interesting results, as well as blowing bubbles to produce attractive prints. Reception children produce realistic interpretations of snowdrops, using white chalk and black paper and pencils to draw twigs and buds following their close observation. Some children know the primary colours, and use them to experiment in colour mixing.

95 Nursery children use musical instruments freely in an imaginative way on the covered outside terrace, and reception children use instruments in an organised way to accompany songs. They name instruments such as tambourine and triangle and all children sing a wealth of songs and rhymes. Children reach standards by the age of five that are similar to those found nationally and they make sound progress.

96 The teaching of creative development is satisfactory overall. Planning for the involvement of support staff in creative activities is effective. The class teacher provides resources which inhibit opportunities for some children, to make their own choices from a range of appropriate media in an independent way.

### **Physical development**

97 Children in the nursery have access to a very well resourced and imaginative play area that is both safe and secure. They use wheeled toys as well as a variety of apparatus which allows children to practise climbing and balancing. Nursery children also use the Key Stage 1 hall on a daily basis for a variety of physical activities. Reception children do not use the separate play area that is available all the year although it is an excellent area for the under-fives. They play in the large playground where there is little opportunity to explore, develop and exhibit their physical skills through the use of large apparatus in structured outdoor play activities.

98 Reception children use the hall twice each week to practise climbing, balancing and dancing. Taped programmes for children under five lack opportunities for children to express themselves creatively or to show ability and imagination. All children use paintbrushes and scissors sensibly to practise cutting and folding paper and card, for example when making a thank you card for the farmer following their farm visit. Children under five make sound



progress in this area of learning and reach standards that are not significantly different from those found nationally.

99 The teaching of children's physical development is sound. Children in the nursery are provided with very good opportunities to make progress in this area of learning. Children in the reception classes, however, have fewer opportunities to build on the standards achieved in the nursery.

## **ENGLISH**

100 In the national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and higher levels in reading was close to the national average but below the average for similar schools. There was a steady drop in standards from 1996 to 1998, when national standards were rising. However, in 1999 standards in school rose at the same pace as national averages. The fall in standards can be partly explained by the unsuitable quality and inadequate supply of reading books and the upward trend corresponds with the introduction of new and more suitable reading materials to support the national literacy strategy. The performance of most pupils in the current Year 2 in reading is better than that of most seven-year-olds. This shows an improvement in standards and good progress.

101 In writing the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was around the national average but below average in comparison with similar schools, although the number reaching higher levels was above the national average. This shows that the school has addressed the need to raise standards for more able pupils noted in the previous report. However, the results show a significant fall in standards from 1998 largely because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs, particularly the number of girls, who took the tests in 1999. Boys performed better than girls in 1999; this goes against the usual picture for the school and the national trend but is explained by the constitution of the Year 2 special educational needs register. Inspection evidence shows that standards in writing in the current Year 2 have improved and are now in line with national averages.

102 Standards in English at Key Stage 2 have been maintained at a good level since the previous inspection which is as good as can be expected. The results of 1999 national tests for eleven year olds show the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level to be close to the national average and the percentage reaching higher levels was well above. This improvement in the performance of more able pupils successfully meets a key issue from the previous inspection. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the school's results were above the national average in all four years. Although there was a dip in 1998, the results rose again in 1999 at a faster rate than the national average. The National Literacy Strategy has had a good impact on raising standards and the school exceeded its targets for English in 1999.

103 As nationally, girls in Year 6 did better than boys, but both boys and girls attain better than the national average and their progress is good. The school's results are good compared with those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The school is on course to exceed the expected level in the National Curriculum test in 2000.

104 Teaching in English is generally good at both key stages and there is a significant amount of very good teaching. It is based on teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the subject and their ability to teach basic literacy skills well. Teachers provide many opportunities for speaking and listening, which impact on good levels of learning at both key stages. Pupils sit quietly, listen attentively to instructions, and work well individually and in groups. They respond very well when teachers make their lessons interesting and use humour. In a very good lesson at Key Stage 1, pupils were so enthused by the challenge

presented when the teacher mimed words containing *ph*, *wh* and *ch* sounds, that they bounced up and down in their eagerness to answer. This approach and the response it brought meant that pupils made good progress learning these words. Consequently, by the time they are in Year 6, pupils listen carefully to the teacher and each other in discussions and talk confidently in a range of situations.

105 Teachers are good at questioning. In lessons they assess how well pupils learn and phrase their questions to enable pupils to reinforce what they have learnt previously. They encourage pupils to consider their answers and to explain their opinions and ideas with clarity. For instance, in a lesson where pupils considered arguments for and against the building of a new supermarket, they expressed their arguments clearly and expanded upon the discussion in which they had taken part earlier in the lesson. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils give pupils the confidence and encouragement to join in discussions. In a lesson in Year 2, using information they had heard in a previous lesson, pupils gave a very clear explanation of the working of the inner ear and used the correct scientific names for the parts of the ear. Some lower attaining pupils, working in small groups, are given the opportunity to answer, without more able pupils dominating the lesson. However, in their enthusiasm to answer, these pupils often do not listen carefully enough and give incorrect answers.

106 Teachers are confident in teaching to the structure of the national literacy strategy. The timetable has been arranged so that often reading sessions are taught separately from word and sentence work. This allows more time to be devoted to writing, while still giving reading the correct amount of time. Direct teaching of reading has a good impact on learning in both key stages. Sound planning brings a clear focus to the teaching of skills and strategies to make sense of new texts.

107 In Key Stage 1, teachers use good strategies to ensure pupils learn the names and sounds of individual letters and groups of letters. Attention to the teaching of basic skills, the introduction of the national literacy strategy and the purchase of new reading books have contributed to a rise in attainment and most pupils are good readers by the age of 7. More able pupils show that they enjoy reading. They read with expression and correct the few mistakes that they make. These pupils talk about the parts of stories that they like and the authors they enjoy reading, such as Roald Dahl. Some average and lower ability pupils, however, cannot name authors. Lower ability pupils do not recognise many words and struggle to find any fluency. Teachers show pupils how to use contents and index pages to look for information. Therefore, pupils extend their knowledge to use alphabetical order to search through registers and telephone directories. They make their own glossaries of words from other subjects, such as the study of hearing in science.

108 Reading is good by the age of eleven. Teachers show how punctuation is used when reading to give greater meaning to text. In a good lesson towards the end of Key Stage 2, the teacher showed how the meaning of a notice such as *Private, No Swimming Allowed* could be made to mean the opposite of its accepted sense by the use of question and exclamation marks. Pupils are taught to read poetry with expression. Very good teaching was seen when the teacher used contrasting poems, humorous and mysterious, to show the way that poems are read creates atmosphere and helps understanding.

109 Teachers make good use of both fiction and non-fiction works to teach pupils to scan work when picking out the main points in the writing. They read interesting and challenging books to pupils, which often prompt pupils to read the same books, and others by the same author, for themselves. Some become avid readers. One pupil, for example, having enjoyed hearing extracts from *The Hobbit* in class lessons, has gone on to read the whole of that book and has ordered other books by J. R. Tolkien, such as *The Lord of the Rings*, from the lending library. Many are members of the local library and have collections of books at

home. Pupils read works by a range of authors such as J. K. Rowling, Roald Dahl and Jacqueline Wilson. More able and average attaining pupils say why they prefer one author to another. These pupils give opinions about the books and, for instance, when talking about the *Harry Potter* stories, refer to previous books in the series to show what they mean. They read with expression. More pupils are accurate readers but some average and lower ability pupils make careless mistakes and do not seem to realise that what they have just read does not make sense. Most pupils show increasing confidence in using contents, index and glossary pages to research information. By Year 6, they understand how to use the library classification system to find particular books. The records of pupils reading that teachers keep do not contain sufficient detail. Teachers rely heavily on the reading diaries that pupils keep. Although these diaries contain details of books read and have brief comments from parents and teachers; they are not used to provide a sufficiently detailed picture of the progress of individual pupils. The school has recognised the need to improve record keeping in reading and is shortly to introduce a new reading record.

110 At Key Stage 1, teachers place importance on building pupils' knowledge of vocabulary to help to improve writing skills. They use the groups of letters taught in reading lessons to compile lists of words and challenge more able pupils to spell difficult words, such as *choir*. They use the correct language to describe words. For example, the teacher told the class that *Persephone*, a name introduced because it contains the *ph* letter combination, is the *heroine* of the story. Pupils benefit from this approach and by Year 2 use more precise vocabulary, for example writing 'sprinted' instead of the more mundane 'ran'. Carefully planned work allows pupils to write stories with a logical sequence of beginning, middle and end. Teachers emphasise the use of capital letters and full stops and more able pupils start to use commas and begin to separate speech with speech marks. There was some inconsistency in teaching in the last school year, however. Although teaching and planning follow the framework of the National Curriculum, teachers in classes in the same year group had different expectations of pupils and did not always present the classes with equal opportunities to progress. For example, children in one class finished the year having learned to join their handwriting, while children in the other class were still printing. Nevertheless, by the time of the inspection, all pupils in Year 2 were joining their letters. Teachers generally organise lessons well and many move at a brisk pace. In some lessons, however, pupils sit on the carpet listening to instructions for too long. This slows the lesson and gives insufficient time for pupils to write.

111 Progress in writing by the age of eleven is good. A strength of pupils' writing in Key Stage 2 lies in the opportunities provided by teachers to produce interesting writing for a variety of purposes. Pupils in Year 6 study local newspaper reports about the dispute over a new supermarket. The teacher shows how bias affects the way reports and letters to the editor are written and stresses the words used in putting forward a particular point of view. Teachers concentrate on developing pupils' vocabulary. They pay attention to teaching pupils how to develop stories and make them interesting. This enables pupils to write expressively and catch the imagination of the reader. For example, one pupil began a story by writing 'Seconds later, a hunched figure appeared', and went on to write a story which was full of suspense. Teachers make good use of poetry and give pupils the chance to write in different forms such as *haiku* and *cinquain*. Teachers plan lessons well and make sound assessments of pupils' progress. The results of National Curriculum tests are analysed to identify areas where learning is weak. However, they do not use marking consistently. Some teachers make comments that show pupils how they might improve their work and tell them what is good about their writing. Other teachers, although they congratulate pupils on a job done well, give insufficient information to help pupils to produce better writing. However, by the age of eleven, as a result of teachers' expectations pupils take care with the presentation of their work and many pupils write in a neat and fluent style.

112 Pupils with special educational needs, whose attainments in reading and writing are below expectations for their age, make good progress towards the targets for their individual education plans. Pupils who need extra support to bring them up to national averages receive specialist teaching during the literacy hour to increase their knowledge of words and sounds. They respond well to the closer contact with the teacher and experience success through carefully planned work that boosts their confidence. Pupils from homes where English is not the first language make sound progress. They receive teaching from a visiting specialist who plans work to complement the tasks provided for other pupils.

113 Many opportunities are provided for pupils to read and write in other subjects. Although computers were not used sufficiently during the inspection to support English lessons, there is evidence in displays around the school that information technology is used in English lessons. At Key Stage 2, pupils copy poetry and import pictures to illustrate their writing. At Key Stage 1, pupils use a poem *The Gingerbread Man* as the basis for work in design and technology and other pupils write instructions for making a cup of tea. In Year 2, pupils write about the senses in science and further writing in science is evident in displays about the dangers of smoking and promoting healthy living. Events from the life of Jesus are presented as a newspaper using a word-processor program and in geography lessons there is written work about the origin and course of rivers. Pupils write their own autobiographies and the biographies of their friends and use these skills when writing about people who live in and around Horncastle.

114 The co-ordinators provide effective leadership for the subject. They have introduced the national literacy strategy successfully including providing staff training and reorganised both libraries to provide stimulating learning resources. Monitoring of the subject and teaching is at an early stage but has given the co-ordinators information about standards in the subject. Insufficient use is made of baseline tests taken at the age of 5 years that indicate likely future attainment. Resources have been improved considerably in the last year. However, there is still a need for more books to provide challenge for more able readers. More books are needed in the newly refurbished library to provide a greater range of reading books and non-fiction books in some topic areas. A number of reference books and encyclopaedias, some of which are nearly 30 years old, are out of date. The school is not yet getting good value for money from the library. It is used for large parts of the day as a teaching base for literacy groups and it is not used regularly by classes or by individual pupils carrying out independent research.

## **MATHEMATICS**

115 At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 national tests, the standards of attainment were in line with those expected nationally by pupils of the same age although below those in similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher levels was below average. Inspection findings judge attainment to be above average in the current Year 2 group. The younger pupils can recognise and pronounce the names of numbers up to 30 and then place them in order. They can count forwards and backwards with confidence and perform the operations of addition and subtraction on numbers up to 10. High attainers use number boards to count in 5s and 10s and can add together two sums of money accurately. In Year 2 they extend their ability to count and use repeated addition to introduce the concept of multiplication. As their knowledge of multiplication tables increases, they learn to share groups of objects and to use the division sign. Most pupils can write simple division sentences and some high attainers can demonstrate their understanding of multiplication and division as reverse processes. Pupils have good mental recall and can often explain their mental strategies.

116 At the end of Key Stage 2, the standards of attainment in national tests were above average and above average when compared with comparable schools, with the percentage of pupils reaching level 5 being well above the national average. Despite a drop in standards

in 1998, the school's improvement is broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings judge standards now to be above those expected nationally by pupils of the same age. At the lower end of Key Stage 2, pupils consolidate their understanding of the four number operations and begin to gain an understanding of simple fractions. They search for patterns in odd, even and square numbers and attempt to make predictions. Most pupils are successful and some high attainers can understand and explain more complex patterns. In Year 5 pupils extend their knowledge and application of multiplication tables. The majority demonstrate the ability to use multiples and factors and to understand inverse operations. Many are able to investigate number patterns in order to prove or disprove a hypothesis. In Year 6 pupils investigate regular polygons in order to understand and use the vocabulary associated with rotational symmetry. The high attainers draw on their accumulated knowledge of number operations to solve complex problems using a variety of mental strategies.

117 Since the last inspection, the school has adopted and successfully implemented the national numeracy strategy. This has provided a structure that has enabled teachers to improve their planning and their procedures for assessing pupils' progress. It also ensures full coverage of the curriculum for mathematics and creates the right balance between mental and written activities within lessons. Although this new approach to mathematics teaching is only in its first year, it is already making a significant impact on standards. Resources for mathematics have also improved but require further investment, particularly in respect of providing greater challenge for the more able pupils. The school has deliberately postponed spending in order to ensure the best resources for the curriculum are purchased. The use of information technology in support of the mathematics curriculum remains underdeveloped and opportunities for pupils to develop their own learning are limited.

118 The standard of teaching is consistently good across the key stages and there are examples of very good teaching in Years 2 and 6. Teachers show sound subject knowledge and encourage their pupils to use the correct mathematical vocabulary. They explain clearly the objectives of the lesson enabling pupils to focus on what is required of them. Many teachers use searching questions, which go beyond the need for an answer and encourage pupils to evaluate their mental strategies. At both key stages, pupils sustain concentration and make good progress because teachers demonstrate good class management and set tasks appropriately matched to ability. Where teaching is very good, teachers have high expectations of their pupils in terms of the amount and demands of work and their levels of concentration and behaviour, and pupils respond accordingly.

119 The curriculum in mathematics is well managed by the co-ordinators who lead the subject at each key stage. There are common formats for planning but marking, while generally well used, is not always consistent. A policy for assessment has been established and is based on the key elements of the numeracy strategy. The co-ordinator looks at planning and monitors the work of colleagues, giving support as needed. The mental activities at the start of lessons provide opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in a mathematical context. The structure of lessons allows pupils to engage in a common theme at different levels so that progress is ensured for both higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects, particularly in calculations and measurement in science investigations.

## **SCIENCE**

120 Teacher assessment in 1999 indicates that standards in science by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. National tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that standards in comparison with other schools and when compared with similar schools are above average. The trend shows a consistent pattern of improvement in science since the last report. Little difference in attainment is seen between boys and girls. During the

inspection, similar levels of attainment were seen to those indicated by test results in Years 2 and 6, although where they were involved in practical activities of an investigative nature Key Stage 2 pupils often achieved higher standards than test results indicate.

121 Pupils in Year 1 are able to make simple electrical circuits and some pupils make predictions about different situations and give reasons for their explanations. For example one pupil predicted that a light would be brighter if more batteries were used, as there would be more power. They communicate their findings by talking, through simple diagrams and writing sentences to describe what happens. Through many practical activities, pupils in Key Stage 1 are learning about their senses. In one lesson pupils thoroughly enjoyed taking the role of a different part of the ear and learning how sound travels in waves through them. They are learning the correct names for the sense organs and their uses and can talk confidently about the eye, tongue and skin.

122 In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the terms 'magnetism', 'attraction' and 'repulsion' and have developed a adequate basis for investigative work when testing the strength of a magnet. In Year 4, pupils understand about gravity and how a force can be measured, for example, by stretching a spring. They follow instructions and measure with reasonable accuracy and are using correct scientific language. Year 5 pupils investigate air resistance with confidence. They can use their previous knowledge and scientific skills to predict what might happen in an experiment and to evaluate their findings accurately. Year 6 pupils, identifying factors which affect size and position of shadows as part of their topic on light, can measure accurately, present descriptive evidence, record in tables, distinguish between direct and indirect evidence and offer hypotheses about unexpected results.

123 All pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs are making sound progress although there are some inconsistencies. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making gains in vocabulary and the process of enquiry. Recognition, sorting and the development of observation are satisfactorily developed and many pupils are recording their work independently. The recent use of discrete science folders helps pupils' organisational skills and allows them to be aware of their own progress. In Key Stage 1 and early stages of Key Stage 2 there is still too much use of worksheets which is sometimes a barrier to pupils' development of independent investigative and recording skills. These do not encourage pupils to understand skills which are specifically of a scientific nature. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils develop their investigative skills, recording techniques, in some instances, appropriately and offer conclusions for their results. In some instances, poor planning for sufficient resources, for example magnets for pupils to work in pairs, may limit progress. In the upper end of the key stage, pupils consolidate the basic steps of experimental work but are secure in explanation, and justification. Access to resources, such as CD-ROMs for independent research at present, is limited although the school is addressing this issue.

124 The quality of teaching, which was judged to be satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 at the last inspection, is now good across the school. The school has used a number of strategies to raise the standard of its teaching in science, including collaborative planning across classes in the same year group and within key stages and training in experimental and investigative science and appropriate activities to extend the knowledge and understanding of all pupils. Teaching observed in the current inspection ranged from very good to satisfactory, one weak lesson being observed in the early stages of Key Stage 2. Lessons have precise objectives, are well structured and include well-planned activities. The management of pupils in most classrooms and during practical activities is very good with the result that they show keen interest and enthusiasm towards practical work and are attentive to discussions and listen to each other's contributions well.

125 Where teaching is good or better, lessons are exciting and information is relevant and understandable. A correct balance is achieved between teacher input and pupil activity and pupils are challenged through effective questioning to explain and justify their answers. When working in groups, there is a sense of effort and sustained concentration by pupils. Pupils work well together in sharing the planning, searching for information and compiling results. Throughout the key stages, good use is made of scientific vocabulary, concepts are reinforced and content is related to pupils' own experience or through the use of examples.

126 Assessment to inform planning has been improved since the last inspection. Adequate use is made of assessment to match progress against learning objectives. Teachers in Key Stage 1 make good use of a variety of informal assessments to inform them of pupils' progress and attainment. At best, standards of marking are good, especially in the later stages of Key Stage 2, with teachers providing supportive comments alongside observations that identify learning needs and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding but practice is not consistent schoolwide.

127 The school achieves a good balance between the knowledge-based and investigative components of the subject. Monitoring of planning by the co-ordinator across the school and newly introduced assessment procedures is ensuring that weaknesses identified in the previous report are being addressed. However, at present, there is no monitoring of teaching across the school. Resources for science have improved since the last inspection. Access to further resources, for example the use of information technology, to further support the curriculum and pupils' independent learning, are planned to be increased once the problems of school access to CD-ROMs in the ICT suite have been resolved.

## **ART**

128 During the last inspection standards were judged to be satisfactory and pupils made steady progress. The lack of a scheme of work was criticised, together with the limited resources. Progress remains satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational special needs and English as a second language. There is now a scheme of work and resources are much improved although the school has identified a need to increase those concerning famous artists. Art contributes to literacy in the plenary sessions of lessons when pupils discuss their pieces of work.

129 In Year 1 pupils experience different media as they use string to create an abstract collage in the style of Matisse and pastel to draw pictures, influenced by *The Gardener* by Arcimboldo. Pupils improve their work by looking at pictures and designs. In Year 2, pupils are testing fabrics and fabric crayons to discover which provides the best effect. They study sculpture, for example producing ferocious fish using card, and the human form using wire and metal foil. Pupils in Year 3 show a sound awareness of basic observational drawing skills as they draw various metal objects from different angles. In Year 5 pupils look closely at the work of William Morris, working hard to produce a drawing in a similar style. They evaluate their own and each others' work in order to improve. Clay pots have been made and decorated in an African style together with attractive examples of a water colour montage created in the style of various African artists. Pupils in Year 6 explore a variety of media in their work concerning World War 1, including a striking montage of a soldier in battle. In talking to pupils they discuss famous artists such as Picasso, Van Gogh and Kandinsky, describing Picasso's work as strange and colourful. Pupils are introduced to a good range of work by different artists, developing a sound understanding of their method and style.

130 Information technology is incorporated in art studies in Key Stage 1 when using *Dazzle*, but this is still to be developed in Key Stage 2. Art is integrated with other subjects

such as history, incorporating large collage figures of the Tudor period in Year 4. Art also features in science in observational drawings and patterns in mathematics.

131 Pupils are satisfactorily learning the necessary skills and techniques in both two-dimensional and three dimensional art. However, in some classes an inappropriate type and size of paper is provided for the planned activity. This inhibits the development of pupils' creative skills or use of learned techniques. Too few pupils work at an appropriate level of independence. The lack of a consistent approach in the recording of ideas and practising skills is creating an inconsistency within classes and year groups. There is no consistent means by which pupils' individual art work can be collated as a record of skills, techniques and ideas as pupils move through the school but the co-ordinators are aware of the need to provide one.

132 Throughout the school displays of paintings and prints enhance the corridors and classrooms, demonstrating the satisfactory progress the pupils are making. The teaching of art is satisfactory overall and teachers show sound subject knowledge. The scheme of work provides for the development of skills to be taught systematically and teaching is consistent between classes within year groups. In the good lessons teachers give pupils opportunities to evaluate their artwork and the work of others, but this good practice is not used by all teachers. In order to develop a more creative approach in lessons and display there needs to be more emphasis on the use of alternative materials. The development of a more creative approach would make a valuable contribution to the aesthetics of the school.

133 The curriculum includes visits to the Tate Gallery in London and the Usher Gallery in Lincoln.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

134 Evidence from lessons, scrutiny of articles made and plans for them, as well as discussions with pupils, indicates that progress is good overall, including the progress of pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language. This is an improvement since the last inspection mainly due to the new guidelines for design and technology that are now used throughout the school. Design and technology contributes to numeracy in the symmetrical design of African masks and to literacy in the development of speaking and listening in explanations given in the plenary sessions.

135 Pupils at Key Stage 1 learn about different mechanisms. They use stories such as *The Three Little Pigs* and *The Gingerbread Man* to design and make simple mechanisms to create pictures of the stories. Pupils use construction kits to make slider and lever mechanisms with understanding. Pupils extend their knowledge about structures in relation to the playground and their homes and work with food when looking at healthy eating.

136 At Key Stage 2, pupils carry out investigations when using a magnetic construction kit to design and make various games. They use clay to design and make a Tudor clay pot and develop good knowledge of pneumatics when designing and making a mechanism that causes an object to move. Pupils also design and make a money container. Older pupils design and make African masks, working from an original design, understanding what they are doing and how to improve their design over time. Pupils plan a recipe in the form of a flow chart to make bread and also make musical instruments based on African drums. In Year 6, pupils construct bridges, investigating balance and strength. They are aware of the problems of working with fabrics when cutting out a pattern and the consequences of a good design which is not well made.

137 Teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers plan well for their lessons and expect a good standard of work from their pupils. Behaviour is always good, as pupils move



between the technology block and their classes. In the best lessons teachers use technical vocabulary well, challenging pupils to improve their work or to produce imaginative and well thought out designs through creative effort. The resources provided are good both in quality and quantity, which is a significant improvement from the previous report. The pupils' recording of design and technology is not sufficiently organised throughout the school, in order to give value to the work that pupils do in the designing and planning process. A whole-school approach is needed to improve the standards of presentation and provide a tool for assessment, as there are no procedures at the present time.

138 The recently developed new scheme of work, based upon the model scheme provided nationally provides a sound basis for teachers to plan their work and has significantly improved teachers' confidence and expertise in the subject. The accommodation for design and technology is a useful area and makes a good contribution to the improvement in progress.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

139 At Key Stage 1 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress although as geography is taught on a two year cycle, some topics may be more appropriate for older pupils and this can affect the progress made by individuals. The use of topic folders, and in some instances, worksheets, make it very difficult for pupils to appreciate the progress they are making and to take pride in what they have achieved. Pupils are learning simple mapping skills and can plan a route from their classroom to the library accurately using correct vocabulary. In one lesson observed, pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about a walk into Horncastle. They spoke very eloquently and made excellent suggestions for the use of some waste land covered in rubbish and present their ideas fluently into a letter to the local council for instance, suggesting using it as a skate and bike park.

140 In the early stages of Key Stage 2, the progress of all pupils including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils are learning about weather systems around the world and how to make simple recordings on a daily basis. The school environment is used effectively to look at pollution caused by rubbish. Results are displayed accurately in a bar chart and pupils make sensible suggestions as to how the situation can be improved. In some instances, the overuse of worksheets with very little challenge, for example the use of weather symbols, has a detrimental effect upon the progress of some pupils. In Years 5 and 6 progress is good. Pupils have developed a good range of geographical skills, for example mapping skills and can use the correct vocabulary with confidence. They enjoy researching into their own locality and comparing this with life in a small town in Kenya. They have detailed knowledge of river systems and their formation and can conduct simple experiments to investigate the effect of the amount of water in a river on velocity and subsequent erosion.

141 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory with some good teaching in Years 2 and 6. Where teaching is good, teachers have a very good subject knowledge, lessons are well planned and activities meet the needs of all pupils and can appropriately draw upon their experiences, knowledge and understanding extending their observational and communication skills. In the best lessons, teachers captivate pupils' interest through use of imaginative teaching methods and activities and as a result pupils have a deep level of concentration and actively involve in discussion to extend their understanding. The use of questioning techniques by all teachers is effective and there are high expectations of listening and involvement in all activities to which pupils respond well. In Years 5 and 6 highly informative marking that clearly challenges pupils' knowledge and understanding results in high standards and neat presentation of pupils' work. Where less satisfactory teaching is demonstrated, tasks given to some pupils lack challenge and teachers' written comments do not inform pupils sufficiently of how to make further progress.

Excellent use is made of visiting speakers, field trips, for example Year 4 to London and Year 6 to Gibraltar Point field study centre, the school grounds and local neighbourhood to contribute to and enrich the curriculum. These activities have a very positive effect upon pupils' learning and are appreciated by parents. Older pupils gain in the acquisition of independent study skills in preparation for the next stage of schooling.

142 There has been noticeable improvement since the last inspection. The role of the co-ordinator in both key stages is developing satisfactorily and the two teachers involved work well together. Resources for geography across the school have increased and are now adequate to meet curricular needs. The use of information technology to support pupils' learning has also improved and there are good examples of its use around the school and in pupils' books, for example word-processing, using simple spreadsheets, and producing pie charts and bar graphs to support investigative work. Parents feel that geography is a strength of school and gives pupils opportunities for independent study. The use of the internet and CD-ROMs for such study and research is strengthening through the use of the new ICT suite.

## **HISTORY**

143 Standards have risen at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection and have remained high at Key Stage 2. Progress is good at both key stages.

144 At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress learning about famous people such as Samuel Pepys and Florence Nightingale. In writing about Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London, pupils show good understanding how the fire started and why it spread so quickly. They learn how the fire led to new methods and materials being used in building and improvements in town planning. Learning about Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War provides good understanding of the suffering of soldiers and this shows in writing when pupils pretend to be reporters. Good quality writing results from this approach. For example, one more able pupil started a report by writing 'Children are waiting, shocked by the news of relatives killed'.

145 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have acquired a great deal of knowledge about the history of Horncastle in Victorian times and during the First World War. Very good arrangements for using information available from photographs, local newspapers and historians, census returns and articles brought in by pupils lead to them making good progress. During Key Stage 2, pupils are caught up in the enthusiasm of teachers for history, in particular the history of Horncastle, and they become adept in interpreting information. Preparations for an excellent Victorian school day in Year 5, during which teachers and all pupils came to school dressed for the part, give pupils a deep insight into life for ordinary children and their families in late Victorian times. Parents play a large part in the success of the day, some of them making items of clothing and producing authentic food for pupils to bring to school, as well as lending a large number of artefacts for the classroom display. The quality of this work carries on into Year 6 where pupils study the First World War, basing much of their work on the effect the war had on people in Horncastle. Photographs of soldiers being recruited into the Horncastle Territorials, posters encouraging men to enrol and accounts of life in the trenches mean that pupils develop a good understanding of the patriotism of ordinary people and the horrors of war.

146 The quality of teaching is good and some is very good. Teachers' planning ensures progression in pupils learning. Consequently, pupils are introduced to aspects of history, which add to and build on previous knowledge. Teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of history, and their enthusiasm for the subject, enables them to stimulate pupils interest by bringing the subject to life. They make use of visits to places of historical interest. For instance, Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of Tudor buildings and are

able to say why Hampton Court Palace was built by the river and what construction methods were used. Teachers' probing questions encourage pupils to think hard. Consequently, in lessons about Henry VIII's flagship, Mary Rose, pupils were able to name artefacts found in the wreck and say where they would have been used on board ship, and for what purpose. Teachers make good use of video evidence and artefacts used in displays in adding to pupils learning. In preparation for the Victorian school day, teachers used original school logs from Horncastle Primary School dating back to 1867. Pupils respond well to teachers' requests to bring in artefacts to enable them to study everyday life in the early parts of the century and the 1950s.

147 Good control of pupils' behaviour is evident in all lessons. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher ensured that all pupils paid attention by expecting answers from everyone. Teachers make good use of display to celebrate pupils' work. A display of paintings in Year 6 gave a graphic picture of soldiers silhouetted against the sky as they went over the barbed wire in World War 1. Teachers effectively link history to subjects such as art and English, although pupils do not regularly use the library for independent study and research. Links with mathematics come through study of statistics of the number of local soldiers killed, and written work is copied up using a word-processor. Teachers assess pupils' work during lessons and check progress through the curriculum against the schemes of work. Pupils' work is marked regularly but teachers are not consistent in their approach to marking. Whilst all teachers praise good work, some do not give sufficient details so that pupils know how to improve their work.

148 The leadership of the subject is very good. Both co-ordinators are enthusiastic and this is communicated to colleagues and pupils. Existing systems for checking planning and the good quality of teaching ensure that the school is capable of maintaining good standards in history.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

149 At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. The younger pupils have opportunities to use computer keyboards to type in text and tape recorders to play taped stories. Working with partners, they word-process appropriate captions for weather maps. They select their favourite fruits and make simple bar charts using a data-handling program. In Year 2 pupils develop their concepts of distance and direction by writing sets of instructions for a programmable device. They take part in a survey to investigate how pupils travel to school and use the computer to graph the results. Pupils extend their geographical knowledge and keyboard skills by writing letters to Barnaby Bear and describing different places. Higher attainers support their history project by word-processing the story of the great fire of London as told by a witness to the event.

150 At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is also broadly in line with national expectations. In the lower years pupils support their work in English by word-processing story openings, endings, play scripts and character portraits and enhance the work in history by drawing Tudor houses using a graphics package. They begin to use more sophisticated software to experiment with style of text and graphics to improve their design and technology booklets. In Year 5 Hindu and Buddhist artefacts and Christian ceremonies are described in word-processed texts while stories from the Bible are produced in the form of newspaper reports. Using information collected from the supermarket, pupils from this year group can type raw data into a spreadsheet and many are able to enter a formula in order to make calculations. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils extend their work in communicating information by combining text and graphics and showing awareness of the intended audience. They use a graphics package to illustrate the cover of a geography project on rivers and sometimes word-process their science experiments. They use the Internet to support projects and can successfully download pictures by the artist Kandinsky to support

their studies in art.

151 Since the last inspection the school has established a new computer suite which enables whole classes at a time to develop their capability in information technology. This has led to more efficient teaching and a faster uptake of skills for the pupils at Key Stage 2, but the facility is not yet available to the pupils at Key Stage 1 who still rely on older class based machines. There has been an improvement in confidence and expertise, particularly by teachers in Key Stage 2, and better standards of achievement by pupils at both key stages. All pupils, including high attainers and those with special educational needs now make satisfactory progress.

152 The standard of teaching in information technology is satisfactory at both key stages and sometimes good in Key Stage 2. Teaching is good when the activity is clearly explained and pupils are able to relate their own level of understanding to the objectives of the lesson. When teachers' knowledge is sufficient the task is challenging for the more able and pupils who misunderstand or make simple errors are supported. As a result, pupils show interest and enthusiasm for learning and sustained concentration when working at computers. In less satisfactory lessons, though, pupils lose concentration because of a delay in receiving support from the teacher. In good lessons pupils are grouped in ways that encourage pupil experts to help those less familiar but guard against the dominance of one individual over their partner and pupils exhibit good collaborative skills. Other features of good teaching are when the challenge relates to the pupils' everyday experience and when pupils are encouraged to consider the advantages and disadvantages of using information technology over more traditional methods.

153 The information technology curriculum is effectively managed by the co-ordinator in Key Stage 2 with support from a teacher in Key Stage 1. They have ensured the significant improvement in the subject since the last inspection. While the new computer suite is an outstanding resource for which the co-ordinators have been mainly responsible, it is not used to its full potential and teachers at Key Stage 2 make insufficient use of classroom computers. A system for recording capability in information technology has been prepared but is not yet in operation. Some subjects of the curriculum are well supported through work in communicating and handling information but control, monitoring and modelling are less well developed. Opportunities for independent research using Internet and CD-ROM technology are limited at present but the school has the leadership and potential to resolve these and other shortcomings and to raise the profile of information technology.

## **MUSIC**

154 At the time of the last inspection pupils were making satisfactory progress overall, and good progress in singing, with some shortcomings in composition at Key Stage 2. This position has not been fully maintained. While progress for all pupils at Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, is generally satisfactory and pupils throughout the school make regular progress in singing, Key Stage 2 pupils' skills in composition and in listening to and appraising music are limited. Opportunities for being creative and using imagination were judged to be limited at the time of the last inspection, and this shortcoming has not been resolved.

155 Pupils throughout the school can sing tunefully with awareness of the mood of the piece being performed. The school choir can sing expressively in parts, have good diction and are learning to perform confidently for an audience. During Key Stage 1 pupils gain experience of playing percussion instruments and learn to keep the pulse. However, Key Stage 2 pupils cannot confidently copy and repeatedly sustain more complex rhythms. Key Stage 1 pupils also use instruments to make simple compositions such as musically illustrating the story of a hedgehog waking after hibernation in Year 2. By Year 4 pupils have

developed little further in composition, however, and Year 3 pupils are unsure about the names of the instruments they use or different ways in which they can be combined to achieve desired effects. Pupils do regularly listen to a variety of music at the start and end of assemblies and acquire an awareness of different styles and types, but Key Stage 2 pupils are not regularly appraising pieces so that they can understand the use of musical elements in creating their own compositions or in informatively discussing what they hear. As a result, Year 6 pupils know the names of the common orchestral instruments but cannot identify how they are used for effect in the pieces of music to which they listen. Year 4 pupils are unable to name well-known composers and have only a general awareness of the differences which exist between the British music heard during assembly in the few weeks prior to the inspection.

156 The teaching of music has shortcomings and pupils' learning in lessons is consequently limited. Many teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject. Whilst at best teachers provide appropriate activities so that all pupils can participate and improve their skills, too often tasks are too general or opportunities for each pupil too infrequent to enable them to develop further. So although pupils participate readily they are often not clear how to refine their first attempts. Although teachers sometimes introduce relevant technical vocabulary, pupils are not always expected to use it in their responses and as a result few do so confidently. Questioning about pieces of music the class listen to, is often too general to assist pupils in focussing on particular relevant features. Although pupils listen attentively for short periods, they are unable to sustain their concentration sufficiently to develop an understanding of how the music evolves and is structured. Equal opportunities are provided for pupils to play instruments in lessons, but as a result of large groupings or inefficient organisation there is often slow pace and such short experiences result in little new learning and work is rarely creative or imaginative. Pupils are infrequently given opportunities to explore sound and use the instruments expressively even in the better lessons, with the result that they have limited ideas on how to compose independently.

157 Provision is enhanced for those pupils who participate in peripatetic or extra-curricular music. These pupils often take part in special events such as singing in Lincoln Cathedral and an annual recorder festival as well as school productions, providing rich experiences and valuable opportunities. Within the curriculum, however, because there is no coherent scheme of work, planning for the different strands of the National Curriculum programmes of study is not always balanced, and progression is not sufficiently structured. Opportunities for pupils to learn essential skills and create their own original pieces are not regular and systematic.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

158 In swimming pupils in Year 6, are reaching standards above nationally agreed levels. Although, during the period of inspection it was not possible to observe swimming lessons, due to the school cycle of physical education provision, it is clear that pupils' standards of attainment are good. Evidence from school records and discussion with pupils confirms this judgement. All pupils in Year 6 can swim. Over 95% have achieved the nationally agreed level of being able to swim 25 metres. Many pupils are swimming distances well beyond. Pupils can swim a range of strokes proficiently and have had experience of water safety and survival techniques. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress through the school. The small number of disabled pupils are integrated well into lessons. They are given appropriate support by learning support assistants and pupils. Pupils' progress in physical education is accelerated in the final two primary years.

159 In Year 1, pupils are beginning to link simple tuck and stretch movements together, both at floor level and on the apparatus in gymnastic lessons. They know that after vigorous

exercise the heart will beat faster. Year 2 pupils have a clear understanding of safety when moving the apparatus in pairs. They make sound progress by practising and refining their movements. Activities are quite challenging so that pupils improve their gymnastic skills. However, pupils do not develop their evaluation skills sufficiently through discussing their activities.

160 In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils show commitment to energetic exercise. They understand the importance of the warm-up session to tone up muscles. They follow the instructions of the teacher in a Tudor dance but have limited opportunities to develop creative movement. Year 4 pupils are developing good skills of appraisal. They discuss the movements of others in the group and make useful suggestions for improvement. They sustain energetic exercise well. Many pupils show good levels of control, working independently to improve take off and landing. They make constructive criticism of other groups in an attempt to improve their overall performance.

161 The standards of teaching and learning throughout the school are generally sound, although teacher expertise and subject understanding is less well developed in Key Stage 1. However, it is good towards the end of Key Stage 2. This is reflected in the standards of pupils' performance. Lessons are planned well in both key stages. There are clear learning objectives, matched to National Curriculum requirements. Activities are designed to build on pupils' previous experiences, developing and refining skills, increasing knowledge and deepening understanding. The teachers' management of pupils is also good. Teachers ensure that pupils concentrate on their tasks and sustain exercise for suitable periods of time.

162 Teachers in Key Stage 2 have high expectations and present challenging tasks and use the time available effectively to physically extend pupils. As a result, pupils collaborate well in dance lessons, in paired gymnastic work and in team games. They observe rules well and show true sporting attitudes in competition. By Year 6 pupils show maturity in their approach and can design their own steps and movements in dance. However, in Key Stage 1 the time allocated to gymnastics is not used effectively. Too much time is lost in moving and assembling heavy apparatus, whilst the majority of the class wait patiently for the operation to be completed. There are some opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively in the upper part of Key Stage 2, but in other year groups insufficient attention is given by teachers to this element. Teachers circulate well amongst pupils in lessons, giving advice, support, encouragement and making informal assessments. As a result, pupils persevere with tasks, are keen to demonstrate, showing other pupils their sequences proudly. This builds pupils self-esteem and helps them to understand how to improve.

163 The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Over the years the school has developed a good reputation for the high standard of its school teams in competitive sport, especially in athletics, netball and football.

164 The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection by making small improvements. The provision of small apparatus has been improved and curriculum planning is beginning to be monitored. Appropriate footwear and clothing is worn by pupils, but occasionally teachers wear inappropriate footwear to conduct lessons. All pupils have equal access and adequate amounts of time are made available for physical education. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject. However, they have had few opportunities due to priority being given to numeracy and literacy in school development. Only a small amount of in-service training for teachers has taken place and the impact has been minimal, especially in Key Stage 1, where teachers' expertise is limited. No formal structured monitoring of the subject has taken place and there are no agreed assessment procedures for tracking individual pupil progress or setting specific targets for improvement. However, a scheme of merit certificates for swimming achievement is established and

valued by the pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

165 At the end of both key stages pupils generally attain standards in line with the locally agreed Lincolnshire syllabus. They make sound progress through the school. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs also make sound progress towards the targets set for them.

166 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a good knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. They recognise religious buildings such as a mosque, church and Sikh temple from photographs. Year 2 pupils recall the sacred symbols of the Sikh religions such as the '5 Ks'. They have a growing awareness of the importance of these items as a basis for faith. Pupils are beginning to understand that religious beliefs can be applied to everyone's lifestyle. They consolidate this notion by compiling a list of the qualities required for a good friend.

167 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have expanded their knowledge and make comparisons between different religions. In Year 6, pupils describe the events leading to a baptism ceremony in detail. They relate their own experiences articulating their views and listening carefully, gaining from the contributions of others and building on their existing knowledge. They realise the importance of strong leadership in religions and list the qualities of Guru Nanak, the Sikh leader. In Year 5, pupils understand the importance of Mecca to the followers of Islam and the need to face in the appropriate direction for prayer. They know that there are special places and celebrations for all religions and that these should be respected by all people.

168 The standard of teaching and learning is generally good. The basic skills of literacy are taught well in lessons. Teachers reinforce the need for accurate sentence structure and punctuation in written work. Information technology skills, in the form of word-processing; are used well to support learning, as shown in the production of millennium wishes and the Nazareth Times in Year 5. Teachers use effective strategies to enlarge pupils' knowledge. Pupils are inquisitive and eager to learn about the symbolism in non-Christian religions. Introductions are interesting and teachers use good questioning skills to draw out pupils' understanding. In these lessons they are keen to participate in lessons and settle well to tasks. However, in contrast some tasks given to pupils are unexciting and involve a significant amount of copying and filling in blank spaces in the text. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities in written work to develop their own views and to use their undoubted reasoning skills. Teachers have high expectations of pupils behaviour and the quality of presentation of pupils work. The management of pupils is good. Teachers create an atmosphere which allows pupils to concentrate and develop an interest of the subject, relationships in class are positive and pupils listen respectfully to the views of others. In general, pupils produce a good volume of work and work at a reasonable pace, rarely being distracted. Artefacts, photographs and books are used to promote pupils understanding effectively. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers make positive comments. However, too few teachers give pupils direction as to how their work can be improved.

169 Religious education makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils gain greater cultural understanding by studying world religions and have opportunities to prepare their own prayers and rules to suit school occasions. Well presented displays in corridors and classrooms enhance pupils' perspective of the importance of symbolism in people's lives.

170 There are no whole-school systems for monitoring pupils' written work or the standards of teaching which limits the co-ordinators' ability to make an accurate evaluation

of the quality of work achieved by pupils. Assessment systems for the monitoring of pupils' progress are also unsatisfactory but the school has made outline plans for addressing this issue.

171 The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Pupils have access to an improved curriculum which covers a good breadth of world religions. The provision of artefacts has enhanced pupils' understanding though visits to places of worship and the input of visitors are very largely limited to Christian religions. The quality of teaching and the attitudes of pupils in lessons has also improved since the previous inspection.