

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Marton, Gainsborough

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120462

Headteacher: Mr Roger Gray

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret Handsley  
19117

Dates of inspection: 22 - 25 May 2000

Inspection number: 191236

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stow Park Road Marton Gainsborough Lincolnshire
Postcode:	DN21 5AG
Telephone number:	01427 718224
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S W Spence
Date of previous inspection:	7 January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margaret Handsley	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Information Technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Art	What can the school do to improve further?
		Design and Technology	
		Religious Education	
		Special Educational Needs	
		Equal Opportunities	
Mike Vineall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for it's pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents and carers?
Brian Griffiths	Team inspector	Mathematics	The school's results and achievements
		Science	How well are pupils taught?
		Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		History	
		Music	
		Physical Education	
		Under Fives	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Marton Primary School is a small school for boys and girls between the ages of four and eleven years. It is situated in the village of Marton, four miles south of Gainsborough in the county of Lincolnshire. Of the 70 pupils on roll, all speak English as their first language. The school's catchment area draws mainly on the wards of Torksey and Stow. Overall, the pupils' background is average and pupils' attainment on entering the school is typical for their age. Children under the age of five are accommodated in the joint pre-reception, reception and Year 1 class. At the time of the inspection there were 12 children under the age of five. Ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs; one has a statement of special educational need. This is below the national average but is a rising proportion of the school population. The number of pupils deemed eligible for free school meals is below the national average. However, this is misleading, as cooked meals are not provided in the area; some parents who may otherwise apply for free school meals do not. The school has a stable team of committed teachers and an active Governing Body. They aim to provide a secure and happy environment in which children are able to fulfil their full potential. Their immediate priority is to continue raising standards by vigorous application of successful practice in all areas.

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

The school is effective in promoting sound standards of attainment, which are rising at a higher rate than the national trend. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and the standard of behaviour is high. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well. The leadership and management are effective, resulting in a good level of improvement since the last inspection. The school provides sound value for money.

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

- Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, number, history, geography and music by the age of eleven is good.
- Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They make good progress.
- Relationships with parents are good.
- The leadership and management are good.
- The quality of accommodation is very good.

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

- Pupils' attainment in the monitoring and data-handling aspects of Information and Communication Technology by the age of eleven is below national expectations.
- In classes that have a very wide range of age and attainment a minority of pupils' needs are sometimes not met.
- The proportion of time spent on swimming every week throughout the school puts pressure on other subjects.

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

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

The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses found in the previous inspection in January 1997.

- Assessment has improved and is now good in English, mathematics and science; it is satisfactory in other subjects.
- Short-term lesson planning has improved and ranges from satisfactory to good.
- Teachers use the schemes of work recommended by government agencies.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum are improving but are not yet systematic enough.
- The rate of improvement in the provision for information and communication technology is good, resulting in raised attainment. Standards are now satisfactory by the age of seven, and

satisfactory in most aspects of the subject by the age of eleven. They remain less than satisfactory in monitoring and data handling.

- The school brochure complies with statutory requirements.

In addition:

- There has been a good level of improvement in the quality of leadership and management.
- There has been satisfactory improvement in standards of attainment.
- Improvement in the quality of education, particularly the quality of teaching, has been good.
- The climate for learning has been maintained at a very high standard.

The school's overall improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## STANDARDS

- As the number in each year group was small, National Curriculum test results are not published. Results from such small year groups are subject to significant variations; one pupil accounts for a large percentage of the whole. The number of pupils in each year group also varies significantly, making year by year comparisons unreliable. However, taking into account national test results over the past four years, standards have risen and are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The overall trend of improvement is higher than the national trend. Inspection findings show the performance of the present Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science is in line with the national average.
- Taking into account national test results for seven-year-olds over the last four years, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average. Teacher assessment shows well above average results in science for 1999; this is better than standards in previous years. Inspection evidence shows performance in line with the national average in English and mathematics, and in line with the national expectation in science.
- Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectation by the age of seven. By the age of eleven, standards are in line with the national expectation for most aspects of the subject, but those in monitoring and data handling are below the national expectation. Pupils meet the expectation of the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education at both key stages.
- Pupils' standards of attainment in art, design and technology, and physical education are in line with those expected for their age at seven and eleven. Standards of attainment in history, geography and music are typical for seven-year-olds, and better than expected for eleven-year-olds.
- The school sets realistic targets, based on pupils' earlier achievement, which make appropriate demands for improvement. The targets are likely to be reached this year.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and have a positive influence on their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour both around school and in lessons is good.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. Pupils form very good relationships both with adults and with each other.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils enjoy 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.*

- The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching is very good in 15 per cent of lessons, good in 48 per cent of lessons, and satisfactory in the remaining 37 per cent. The quality of learning is generally sound; it is very good in two per cent of lessons, good in 41 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 57 per cent. In five out of 27 lessons the good quality teaching does not always result in good quality learning for three reasons. Firstly, in classes of three year groups with a wide range of age and ability, whole class instruction can not fully meet each individual need. In one class, a small minority of pupils lack concentration and slow the pace of learning. Secondly, the class of pre-reception, reception and Year 1 pupils is large. This presents significant difficulties in supervising and supporting learning at the right level for each age group. Thirdly, time taken by swimming reduces time available for other subjects compared with other schools. Nevertheless, teaching and learning are always satisfactory or better.
- The teaching of children under five is good in language and literature, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development; teaching is satisfactory in personal and social development and physical development.
- Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Pupils reach good standards in speaking and listening and in number. Opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are used effectively to support learning.
- Teaching is good in English, science, history, geography and religious education in both key stages. It is good in mathematics and music in Key Stage 2.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. However, the proportion of time spent on swimming puts pressure on other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are satisfactorily promoted; their moral and social development are promoted well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for the pupils well, takes their welfare seriously and supports their all-round development.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents and carers?	Parents have a justifiably positive view of the school. They value the very good quality information provided. Parent helpers make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and staff work very effectively together, sharing the same vision and providing educational direction for the all-round development of the school. The present organisation of teaching groups, however, presents difficulties that sometimes affect pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well organised and effective. Governors provide clear direction for the overall development of the school. They provide support and monitor the effectiveness of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and governing body are aware of the strengths of the school, and of areas requiring development. Priorities identified in the School Development Plan are entirely appropriate to further the school's work. Training for teachers makes a good contribution to school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient members of staff to teach the curriculum. However, this depends on the headteacher taking on a full time teaching commitment. Ancillary staff and parent helpers make a good contribution to the welfare of the school. Learning resources are good in mathematics, science and music. Resources are used well. The standard of accommodation is very good. Financial planning and administration are good. The school looks for best value for money.

## 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>• Children are happy to come to school.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and make good progress.</li> <li>• Parents are kept well informed and feel comfortable talking to staff.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons is limited.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Inspection evidence does not support the concern of a minority of parents about the range of activities available outside lessons.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Numbers in each year group are too small to allow a reliable analysis of the school's results in national tests in any one year. However, taking into account the results over the past four years, the small number of pupils taking tests in any one year, and pupil absence at the time of the tests, standards by the age of eleven have been rising and are around average in English, mathematics and science. The exception to the rising trend was in 1998, when two potentially high achieving pupils were absent for the tests in English and mathematics. Overall, the trend is rising at a higher rate than the national trend.
- 2 The analysis of test results for seven-year-olds is subject to the same reservations. Taking into account the results over the past four years, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average. Teachers' assessment of attainment in science, by the age of seven, is well above the national average. This is better than standards in earlier years.
- 3 At the ages of seven and eleven, girls achieve higher standards in tests than boys do. The difference over the past four years is greater than is found nationally. However, these differences were not seen in pupils' work or in lessons during the inspection.
- 4 The school sets targets for pupils' achievements in tests which are realistically based on pupils' earlier achievement, and challenging in that they make appropriate demands for improvement. The school is likely to reach the targets for the current year.
- 5 The results of national tests support inspection judgements. Attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- 6 By the age of eleven, pupils achieve good standards in speaking and listening, largely as a result of the many opportunities made for discussion. Pupils of average and above average attainment can give clear accounts of their ideas, when considering differing viewpoints towards the building of a new motorway, for example, or when describing how they respond to a poem. Pupils' performance in reading is well in line with national expectations, and is average in writing.
- 7 Most pupils handle number well, because number work is thoroughly and interestingly taught. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils give speedy and accurate answers when doubling numbers up to 100, and over, in what is presented to pupils as a game. They can collect simple data, present it in graphical forms and extract information from the resulting charts. Their understanding of shapes and their properties is in line with national expectations and they can name and classify three-sided and four-sided shapes readily and accurately. Higher attaining pupils go well beyond this and can, for example, calculate the angle formed when the sides of a regular six-sided shape are joined to a central point.
- 8 In science, pupils reach average standards across a varied and interestingly presented curriculum. Practical and investigative work makes a positive contribution to attainment.

- 9 By the age of seven, attainment is in line with the national average in all aspects of English, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils read accurately and confidently and handle number well, mainly because work is often well matched to their existing knowledge and skills. Most pupils have a good grasp of what constitutes a fair test when they plan scientific experiments. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs learn well in relation to their individual learning targets.
- 10 The achievements of eleven-year-olds are above the national expectation in history, geography, and music. All three subjects are carefully planned and have stimulating practical elements, which include work beyond school – historical visits, geographical field trips and musical performances. In religious education, attainment is in line with the expectations set out in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Attainment in art, design and technology, and physical education are in line with the national expectation, with higher attaining pupils doing good work. Although pupils' achievement in information and communication technology is improving, it remains below the national expectation in monitoring and data handling. Improvements in resources and teaching methods are resulting in improvements in attainment, but have not yet fully compensated the older pupils for the unsatisfactory provision seen at the time of the last inspection
- 11 At seven years old, pupils' achievements are in line with the national expectation in information technology, where recent improvements are having a positive effect. They are in line with the local expectation in religious education and with the national expectation in art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education.
- 12 Children under the age of five make sound progress and, by the time they are five, reach standards typical for their age in each of the nationally agreed areas of learning. Children respond well, relate well to adults and are beginning to share toys and equipment. They enjoy listening to stories, enjoy talking to adults and can recognise and write their name. Children can recite number rhymes, count accurately up to ten and recognise two-dimensional shapes such as squares and circles. Their knowledge and understanding of the world are sound. They are developing an understanding of time and place appropriate for their age. Pupils run, jump, and play with rings and balls with a suitable level of dexterity. They enjoy activities such as painting, singing and playing and develop expected levels of skill.
- 13 Looking back over the previous attainment of the older pupils, most pupils made variable progress in English and science as they moved through the school. Progress in mathematics was consistent. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make most progress when their class does not cross key stages. However, at the time of the inspection, pupils made sound or good progress in lessons. This reflects the improvements in educational provision made since the previous inspection.
- 14 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in response to the good quality individual provision made for them.

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

- 15 Children under five have positive attitudes to learning. They relate well to adults and enjoy their activities. Their behaviour is good, although, they tend to become restless when the teacher's attention is directed towards older pupils.

- 16 Pupils' attitudes to school are very good in both key stages. They settle down quickly, pay attention and show interest in lessons. They readily join in discussions and show respect for the views of others. Most concentrate well and try hard. All the parents who returned the questionnaire agree that their children like school, are eager to come to school and show interest in their work. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the provision made for them. They persevere and try hard. The family-like atmosphere of the school creates a positive climate for learning.
- 17 Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Pupils are courteous, trustworthy and polite. They respect school property and look after their own. Parents agree that the school has a high standard of good behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them. Behaviour management by teachers is good and carried out in a very pleasant manner. When a small minority of pupils lose interest, teachers work hard to keep them on task. The school is particularly effective in identifying and dealing promptly with bullying. A number of parents mentioned instances of such behaviour being sensitively, but firmly handled. There have been no exclusions.
- 18 The relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Teachers and ancillary assistants demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of individual pupils. Pupils respect their teachers with whom they develop a good rapport. Relationships between children are also very good; for instance, mixed groups of different ages and genders readily work together. The older pupils are very caring towards the younger ones. This has a positive impact on personal development, which is good. Pupils develop confidence and initiative; they readily take on responsibility when given the opportunity. For example, older pupils look after younger ones at break times; they set out the hall for assembly and work the music centre and overhead projector with skill and care.
- 19 Attendance is good, slightly better than attendance nationally, and the few pupils who occasionally lapse are carefully monitored. Teachers and governors remind parents regularly of the importance of good attendance. Punctuality is also good.

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

- 20 The quality of teaching is good overall. In almost two-thirds of the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was either very good or good and in the remainder, teaching was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
- 21 Literacy and numeracy are taught well so that pupils learn at a good rate and achieve above average standards in speaking and listening, and in number. The rate of learning is satisfactory in other aspects of English and mathematics; pupils reach average standards. In many subjects such as religious education, writing from the viewpoint of a child from another Faith enhances learning both in religious education and in the basic skills. Numeracy is used well in subjects such as science, to enhance pupils' learning. Opportunities to use information and communications technology in other subjects, such as literacy, are not always taken.
- 22 Teaching is good at both key stages in English, science, history, geography, and religious education. It is good in Key Stage 2 mathematics and music. The teaching of under-fives is good in language and literature, mathematics, the knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects and aspects.

- 23 In almost all aspects of teaching, teachers work well. They know and understand the subjects they teach and they know their pupils well; lesson planning is clear and pitched at a level to make appropriate demands on pupils. Relationships are very good and this ensures that pupils usually behave well. Teachers are well aware of pupils' learning and adjust the pace of lessons accordingly. Pupils improve their knowledge, understanding and skills at a rate that is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and so make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans.
- 24 The good quality teaching does not always result in good quality learning for three reasons. Firstly, in classes of three year groups, with a wide range of age and ability, teaching can not always fully meet each individual need. In one class, a small minority of pupils lack concentration and slow the pace of learning. Secondly, the class of pre-reception, reception and Year 1 pupils is large. This presents significant difficulties in supervising and supporting learning at the right level for each age group. Thirdly, time taken by swimming reduces time available for other subjects compared with other schools. Nevertheless, teaching and learning are always satisfactory or better. Teachers capitalise on the wide spread of age and attainment in order to enhance pupils' personal and social development. Older pupils take responsibility for younger ones when they are working in groups. This transfers to play situations, when older and younger pupils play together well and form constructive relationships with one another; older pupils learn to show initiative and take responsibility; younger ones acquire relatively sophisticated social skills.
- 25 Many of the characteristics of the best teaching were seen in a numeracy lesson in upper Key Stage 2. The lesson plan set clear targets for pupils' learning. Well-chosen learning resources were ready for immediate use. The teacher established a relaxed, purposeful atmosphere and motivated the pupils to work on high level number work at a fast pace; pupils' learning at all levels of attainment benefited because questions were matched very well to what they already knew, and what they should learn next. Boys and girls were given equal opportunities and responded equally well. Pupils enjoyed bettering their targets.
- 26 Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. There is now twice as much good teaching, and the ten per cent of unsatisfactory teaching reported at the last inspection has been eliminated. Teachers' lesson planning is better throughout the school, especially for pupils under five. Teachers' subject knowledge remains secure. Their limited expertise in information and communication technology seen at the time of the last inspection has been addressed. Class management has improved, and is now good. Relationships between adults and pupils are now very good. The good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs has been successfully maintained.

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

- 27 The school provides a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities to which all pupils have access. Its provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The strategies for literacy and numeracy are effective and there is a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities.

- 28 In many respects the curriculum is satisfactorily broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of pupils. The school meets the statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum for the age-range, as well as religious education. However, an unusual feature of the school is that pupils in all age groups participate in swimming every week. This takes a minimum of two hours per week throughout the year. The loss of this ten per cent of teaching time has a knock-on effect on the rest of the curriculum. This contributes to the situation in which good teaching does not always result in good learning. In all other respects, the balance between areas of learning for children under five, and of subjects for other pupils is satisfactory, and some aspects of provision are good.
- 29 Pre-reception and reception children share a class with Year 1 pupils. The curriculum provided for this class effectively blends together the national guidelines for under-fives and the first year of the National Curriculum. The difficulties associated with providing for a large class, using two differing curricula, results in some aspects of the curriculum for under-fives being under-represented. The youngest pupils have too few opportunities to play with large equipment. This reduces opportunities for physical development, creative development and social development. Nevertheless, imaginative lesson planning and thorough preparation are minimising the effects of this imbalance in the under fives' curriculum.
- 30 The school provides opportunities that enable pupils to develop a sound knowledge of health and personal safety issues. The provision for pupils' personal and social development is carefully considered and effective. The cultivation of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key feature of the school's work and is central to the governing body's aims for the school; consequently, pupils develop well in these areas. There is a daily act of collective worship, which provides time for reflection and prayer. Along with opportunities made in subjects such as art and music, these encourage pupils' sound spiritual and cultural development. Provision for moral and social development is good. The school has a clear code of conduct, which plays a proper part in enabling pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Teachers and other adults set good examples to pupils and establish good relationships with them. The school is justifiably proud of the mutual respect that exists between adults and pupils. Teachers skilfully take advantage of the wide age range in classes to support pupils' personal and social development. Pupils work together in pairs and larger groups of mixed ages to the benefit of all; younger pupils learn skills of collaboration and older pupils learn to take responsibility, to show initiative and to care for others. The school's approach to sex education and to drug misuse are informal and policies are not yet fully in place. However, the work in these areas is effective.
- 31 The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with statements receive the provision identified for them. The support provided by teachers and ancillary assistants is carefully planned and effective. As a consequence, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets.
- 32 The curriculum is enriched through the provision of extra-curricular activities such as games, sporting fixtures with other schools and music. It is further enhanced by a systematic programme of educational visits to enhance provision in a range of subjects, including history, geography, music and science, as well as pupils' personal and social development.
- 33 The school has good links with the local playgroup, helped by members of the governing body who work with the playgroup. Links with the secondary schools to

which pupils transfer at the age of eleven are satisfactory; the school works hard to overcome the difficulties associated with the number of secondary schools concerned and the distances involved.

- 34 Since the last inspection, the school has continued to provide a suitably broad and relevant curriculum and this is now supported by appropriate schemes of work in all subjects. The provision for pupils' moral development has improved and is now good.

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

- 35 The school cares for the pupils well, takes their welfare seriously and supports their all-round development. Most parents recognise and appreciate the family-like atmosphere which is characteristic of the school.
- 36 The caring approach is underpinned by the staff's very detailed knowledge and understanding of individual pupils. The very good monitoring and promotion of attendance, and the equally good handling of oppressive behaviour, are essentially informal but based on knowledge and understanding of the children. Behaviour is well managed in the same way. This is made possible by the closeness and very open communications of the small staff.
- 37 Welfare procedures are well documented and teachers understand them well. This includes procedures for health and safety, child protection, medical issues and first aid.
- 38 A criticism in the last inspection report concerned the recording of academic progress and the use of assessment information to inform subsequent planning. The assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science, introduced since the last inspection, are good. These include individual target setting and review on a regular basis. Teachers have held meetings to review pupils' work and to agree levels of attainment. The older pupils are aware of what is required at each level and know what they have to do to reach the next level. Assessment in the foundation subjects remains relatively undeveloped, but nevertheless fulfils statutory requirements. Assessment procedures in information and communication technology are systematic, assessing the building up of skills in each strand of the subject. The use of assessment to inform future planning is satisfactory, but still needs to be more systematic. The analysis of information from the results of national tests is successfully used to make changes in the curriculum at a whole school level.
- 39 The monitoring of personal development, and the provision of appropriate support and advice, is another area where essentially informal procedures, based upon the close knowledge of the children, are seen to be effective. The school makes good provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

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

- 40 As at the time of the last inspection, links with parents are good and parents have a justifiably positive view of the school. Parents make very positive comments, singling out strengths such as "the atmosphere" and "approachability of staff". The great majority of parents who returned a questionnaire agree that the school works closely with parents and they find staff approachable.
- 41 The quality of information sent to parents is very good. They are kept well informed of all events and occasions. Parents particularly like the weekly "Homelink" letters that

explain, and give insight into, the work being tackled by their children. These letters give clear indications of how parents can help with this learning.

- 42 Reporting on pupils' work is also regularly praised. The weekly reports on all pupils are especially popular and appreciated. These structured ratings (including behaviour and attitudes) are being gradually developed to become a two-way communication between home and school. They now incorporate comments from both teacher and parents. Home reading sheets are also used in this way. Annual reports are detailed and full with a good explanation of pupils' strengths and weaknesses; individual targets are set. However, they do not offer any indication of how pupils are performing in relation to national norms.
- 43 Teachers encourage personal contact and make this easy by making themselves available until 5.00 pm every evening. Both spontaneous and arranged discussions take place at such times. An Open Afternoon is held, after the annual reports are sent out, when pupils show their work to their parents. Ninety per cent of parents attend this event.
- 44 A significant number of parents are directly involved in pupils' learning, particularly with the youngest pupils. A good number of parents are trained to help with reading. The governors have recruited three new parents as governors. They are very enthusiastic and work hard to keep in touch with other parents. They are currently trying out a governor / parent 'clinic'.
- 45 The PTFA (that is, the parents, teachers and friends' association) as well as providing social activities, makes a significant financial contribution to the school.
- 46 The good relations with parents make a very real and significant contribution to pupils' progress and the quality of their education.

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

- 47 The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and staff work very effectively together, sharing the same vision and providing educational direction for the all-round development of the school. They work very well together to develop the curricular provision. The management is strong, with all the staff making significant contributions to the growth and development of the school. The present organisation of pupils into classes, however, presents difficulties that affect some pupils' learning. The school's aims and values, such as the emphasis on pupils' personal development, are reflected in everyday life. The equality of opportunity policy is put into practice, for example, by analysing and addressing differences in standards of attainment. Pupils' development and welfare are considered individually. Staff know the pupils well. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is of good quality and is in line with the Code of Practice. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- 48 The governing body is well organised and effective. Governors take their responsibilities seriously, working closely together with the headteacher, providing support and monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work. The governing body gives clear direction to the development of the overall provision. Individual governors take responsibility for subjects or aspects, such as literacy or special educational needs, monitor the provision and make sure the governing body is kept up to date. Governors have a close understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school,



which guides their thinking for the future, such as planning improvements in provision for information and communications technology. They monitor standards, taking account of the results of formal tests and set targets for improvement. Some members of the governing body have undertaken recent training to keep up to date.

- 49 As the teaching staff is small, each teacher takes on several subject co-ordination roles. They work closely together to develop the curriculum. This is effective in establish consistency in the way it is taught. The teachers analyse the results of formal tests to discover strengths and weaknesses in the school's curriculum. They take action on this information, changing the provision to strengthen areas of weakness, such as younger pupils' writing. This is effective in improving standards. The monitoring and development of teaching has improved. The headteacher has recently introduced a programme of monitoring, which promotes consistency in the quality of teaching. For example, recent monitoring of the numeracy lessons resulted in improved consistency in teaching the scheme of work, making more coherent provision throughout the school.
- 50 The school makes good use of its financial resources. Funding for special educational needs is used well to give pupils good quality support. The parents' association make a substantial financial contribution to the school each year, which provides additional resources, such as the library. The governing body plans carefully to accommodate the variations in pupil intake from year to year. Educational priorities are very well identified and are well supported by the available budget. In recent years the headteacher and governing body have carefully managed a negative budget (with the permission of the local authority). Priorities are tightly defined and the principles of best value applied well. The budget was successfully balanced. The school recently received a rate rebate, which allows some flexibility in addressing the immediate priorities. Day to day financial control and internal communication are effective, contributing to the smooth running of the school.
- 51 The well-established staff has a complementary range of expertise to teach the full range of the curriculum. The ancillary assistants are capable and effective. The administrator, ancillary staff and parent helpers, make a good contribution to the welfare of the school. The accommodation is of a very high standard. The school building is modern, spacious and attractive. Together with the outdoor play areas, sports field and conservation area, this makes it a very valuable contribution to the educational provision.
- 52 The level of improvement in the quality of leadership and management since the last inspection is good. The headteacher's full time teaching commitment places constraints on time. However, the School Development Plan addresses the need for additional staffing. The quality of the work of the headteacher, staff and governors, with the high level of morale in the school community, places the school in a good position to continue to improve.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53 The headteacher, staff and governors should continue to work together to raise standards and should now:

- ◆ \*Improve pupils' attainment, by the age of eleven, in the monitoring and data-handling aspects of information and communication technology by:
  - extending training for teachers in these aspects of the subject;
  - making regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in the subject to help teachers plan the next stage of learning;(paragraphs 10, 92)
  
- ◆ Ensure that the good quality teaching is equally effective for all pupils by:
  - organising teaching groups so that the spread of needs of different groups of pupils is less diverse and more manageable;(paragraphs 13, 24, 28, 47, 55, 73, 88)
  
- ◆ Give more time to other subjects of the curriculum, so that each subject is properly represented, by reviewing arrangements for swimming.  
(paragraphs 13, 29, 55, 57)

\* *The school is aware of the need to raise standards in these aspects of information and communication technology and addresses this in the School Development Plan.*

In addition to the key issues above, the following, less important developmental points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- ◆ Ensure more consistent progress throughout the school by:
  - monitoring individual pupils' progress in core subjects at regular intervals;
  - setting target levels for improvement;
  - extending the curricular provision for pupils under-five by providing more opportunities to learn through structured play.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	15	48	37			

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	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	70
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	63
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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	21

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	144325
Total expenditure	133103
Expenditure per pupil	1930
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3370
Balance carried forward to next year	7852

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	70
Number of questionnaires returned	46

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	23	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	32	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	36	2	2	0
The teaching is good.	93	5	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	25	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	14	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	65	31	0	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	29	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	50	4	0	7

## **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**

- 54 Children are admitted at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday. Attendance can be either full or part time but is usually full time. Children born early in the academic year spend two terms in the pre-reception stage, and three terms in reception, before starting National Curriculum Year 1 work. Children born in the middle of the school year (December to March) spend one term in the pre-reception stage and three terms in reception. Those born at the end of the academic year go straight into reception. This means that the youngest children in any year spend significantly less time at the pre-reception stage than the older ones. Children who begin their education before the reception stage require a curriculum reflecting their learning needs. At Marton, the curriculum is narrower and less practically based than that for most children of their age. This is because of the wide range of learning needs in the same class (pre-reception, reception and Year 1), the large size of the class, and the adult-child ratio that is much higher than usual for children of pre-reception age. The school is aware of the situation and is monitoring the consequences. The policy has been operating for too short a period of time, and the numbers of pupils involved are too low, to form a view on how this affects attainment. However, the situation gives rise to children being offered different opportunities for pre-reception experience, depending on the time of year they were born.
- 55 The curriculum for under-fives is based on the areas of learning and early learning goals, as recommended by government agencies. The class also contains Year 1 pupils, whose curriculum is planned using the subjects of the National Curriculum. This allows the teacher to make a smooth transition from areas of learning to National Curriculum subjects which in many ways benefits most pupils. The smoothness of the transition is made possible by careful planning and the experience and hard work of the class teacher. The class is large. At present, one teacher, supported by an ancillary assistant, teaches 32 children. Parent helpers give valuable, regular assistance. The class occupies a spacious teaching area, which at one time consisted of two classrooms; it has access to its own, well-equipped, outside play area. This play area is under-used during the school day due to the large areas to be supervised and the number of children in the class. This restricts the curriculum. In particular, the youngest children have too little experience of well-planned outdoor play, which contributes to creativity, physical development and language development. The teacher's imaginative use of indoor resources helps to minimise the effect on children's learning.
- 56 The relaxed atmosphere of the class allows most children to settle down quickly, make friends and be ready to learn. Overall, teaching in the nursery class is good; in many sessions children learn at a good rate. Children enjoy the activities planned for them and respond well, especially to creative work such as painting and modelling. Children's attainment by the end of the reception year is generally in line with the national expectation, with some pupils reaching high standards for their age and a smaller proportion not reaching the expected standard.
- 57 In personal and social development, five-year-olds reach standards that are in line with those expected for their age. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and children respond well to teaching, to adults and to other children. Pre-reception children are able to dress themselves, including changing for physical education sessions, with a

little help. They relate well to adults. They enjoy playing alongside other children at desk-based activities and begin to learn to share toys and equipment. Outdoor play is used too infrequently for it to make its full contribution to these personal skills. Children usually behave well, although the younger ones become restless on some of the occasions when the teacher's explanations are directed more at older pupils. However, they also gain some benefit from working alongside the Year 1 pupils, who often set good examples of behaviour and self-sufficiency.

- 58 In language and literacy, five-year-olds achieve the standards expected for their age. They respond well to the teaching, which is well planned and stimulatingly presented. The youngest children play contentedly alongside others but without much use of language until encouraged by an adult. When this occurs they join in and enjoy the interaction. They reach standards in speaking and listening that are appropriate to their ages. Children enjoy listening to stories, which are chosen well and interestingly read. By the age of five, many children can write their names. Almost all five-year-olds can read their own name. The teaching methods used in the National Literacy Strategy have a more beneficial effect on older children than on those of pre-reception age. They find it difficult to concentrate long enough and find some of the work too hard.
- 59 In mathematics, children are taught well and make good progress with number work. By the age of five, they attain all round standards that are typical of their age. They master mathematical language such as 'small', 'little' and 'big'. They recognise and extend simple patterns and know the names of two-dimensional shapes, such as square and circle. Higher attaining children can count confidently and accurately to 100. Many children enjoy learning, and can repeat number songs and rhymes. The teaching methods of the National Numeracy Strategy benefit the older children but the pre-reception children find concentration in the whole-class sessions too difficult; this loss of concentration makes teaching other pupils harder and slows the rate of learning. Pupils' progress remains satisfactory largely because of the vigilance of the staff.
- 60 In knowledge and understanding of the world, five-year-olds reach standards that are in line with the national expectation. Teaching is of good quality and children acquire knowledge, understanding and skills at a good rate. Children talk sensibly about their home village and some of those who come to school by car can explain that it is too far to walk. By the age of five, many children are developing an appropriate sense of time: for example, they can explain that now that spring is here, it will soon be summer and they will be going on holiday. Children begin to use the computer and can work at an appropriate level by the age of five. Many five-year-olds can explain at a high level that plants need warmth, light and moisture in order to grow. In a lesson that linked the story of Jack and the Beanstalk to the growing of bean plants in different conditions, children's learning progressed rapidly.
- 61 In physical development, children make satisfactory progress up to the age of five and reach the expected standard. Their best learning takes place in physical education lessons in the school hall, when well structured lessons result in a good rate of learning. Too little use is made of the outdoor play area for structured play for it to make its full contribution to pupils' abilities to control moving toys and large constructional apparatus. Nevertheless, five-year-olds can run and jump, and play with rings and balls with a level of skill that is close to what is usually seen. The teacher makes good use of opportunities for pupils to develop dexterity in the use of tools and desk-based puzzles and games.

- 62 In creative development, children make generally good progress in classroom based activities because teaching is well organised, a wide range of resources is made available and children respond well to the adults who work effectively with them. Children's achievements are in line with those seen nationally. They successfully use a range of materials such as paint, modelling media and crayons in order to explore colour, shape, texture and space. They develop their imagination through music, play and listening to well-told stories. Art activities make a particularly good contribution to children's learning because they are thoughtfully planned and good quality materials are well prepared before the lesson starts.

## ENGLISH

- 63 In both key stages, differences in performance in the national curriculum tests from year to year reflect the differences in the size and make up of each year group. The number of pupils in each year group is very small, and the number of pupils with special educational needs varies from year to year, therefore, even small changes in attainment can result in significant changes in the overall percentages. The trend over the last four years shows attainment rising to above average at the end of Key Stage 2, compared with the national trend. The trend in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 remains average overall, compared with the national trend.
- 64 Inspection evidence shows that, by the age of seven, pupils' overall performance in English is average. By the age of eleven also, pupils' performance is average. Differences between the performance of boys and girls apparent in test results are not apparent in lessons or in their work over the year.
- 65 Targets set for pupils are realistically based on their previous performance but challenging enough to require them to work hard over the year. The school is likely to meet the targets this year.
- 66 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in speaking and listening. Most pupils listen to the teacher and to each other. They show understanding of the main points of what is being said, when talking about their favourite computer program, for example, and express opinions about favourite books, such as an adventure of 'Bangers and Mash'. They can express their ideas in some detail. Pupils can speak out clearly in class sessions, using appropriate vocabulary and tone of voice.
- 67 By the age of eleven, pupils' performance in speaking and listening is good when compared with the national expectation. They listen with a good level of concentration in lessons, develop and share opinions with confidence and ask questions that demonstrate development in their thinking. In discussions with the teacher, pupils readily ask questions and make comments that help them to learn, such as when discussing differing viewpoints about the building of a new motorway. They benefit from a wide range of opportunities to speak out both in class and to a wider audience, such as in assembly, when they adopt a more public way of speaking. They are becoming proficient at using Standard English.
- 68 By the age of seven, pupils' performance in reading is in line with national expectations. They know how to go about reading new words by using their knowledge of letter sounds and blends, looking at pictures, and using the context of the story. They show interest in stories and poems and can talk about the main characters and sequence events in a story such as 'The Griffin'. Higher attainers show



a good understanding of story structure. Pupils understand what they read and can talk readily about it. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction but are not familiar with the terms. They know how to use the library and a simple dictionary. Pupils take books home to practise. The support and help that pupils receive from parents, both at school and at home, has a positive effect on reading.

- 69 By the age of eleven, pupils' performance in reading is in line with national expectations. Most pupils read fluently, accurately and with good expression. Pupils read a range of well-known and popular authors and talk about their preferences. They know a range of different types of fiction such as horror stories, thrillers and humorous writing. The higher attainers are good at comprehension, can explain the writer's intention when interpreting a poem, for example, and describe the mood evoked. Pupils are able to use a library to research information but most prefer to research using a CD-ROM. All pupils, including the least fluent, say they are interested in reading and read frequently at home.
- 70 By the age of seven, pupils' performance in writing is broadly in line with the national expectation. Pupils can write stories and reports with a widening range of vocabulary. The higher attainers are becoming aware of choosing words for effect and writing in story style. They structure sentences correctly and arrange them in a logical sequence. They know how to plan and develop a short piece of writing, such as a story or a poem. Pupils' attainment in grammar, spelling and punctuation is satisfactory but is not always apparent in their stories; some forget to use capital letters and full stops, for example. Pupils' handwriting is joined but is generally immature in form.
- 71 By the age of eleven, pupils' performance in writing is in line with the national expectation. Their stories are well planned and developed, and capture the imagination. They write for a wide range of purposes in different subjects. They develop word processing skills at an appropriate level. These include a 'newspaper report' in geography, presenting arguments for and against building a new motorway, and a 'diary entry' in religious education where pupils describe their feelings about a Jewish celebration. Pupils are developing individual styles, which often reflects their preferred reading. Their work is well presented with correct use of punctuation and neat handwriting.
- 72 Pupils' attitudes to English are good throughout the school. They enjoy the lessons and most are keen to take part in discussion. This was seen, for example, in a lesson about a humorous poem entitled 'Thirteen questions you must ask if you lose your ears at school'. In writing, such as when comparing two poems, they are willing to help each other and appreciate each other's work. The majority work very well in independent group tasks. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good, in response to teachers' good quality behaviour management. They relate easily to others of different ages, attainment and gender. Pupils co-operate well during group sessions and, guided by individual targets, take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils particularly enjoy joining in shared reading. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the good quality provision made for them and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
- 73 The quality of teaching is consistently good in both key stages. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are thorough in their approach to teaching skills in reading and writing. Pupils in Key Stage 1, for example, are gaining a sound understanding of letter sounds and blends, which they use in reading and

spelling. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn how different kinds of texts are structured and can pick out significant features, such as hidden rhymes in a shape poem, and how this is used to create an effect. Lesson planning is clear and in line with the National Literacy Strategy. Learning objectives are appropriate for the age of the pupils. Pupils are tackling work at the right level for their age, although some pupils in classes of three year groups need more support. Teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs so that the majority works productively in independent group sessions. Pupils are interested and concentrate on their task. Teachers keep a brisk pace to their lessons so that pupils are involved and responsive. Pupils with special educational needs have good quality support and make good progress. Teachers know the pupils well and understand their learning. They set appropriate targets to improve pupil's achievement. Teachers make sound use of homework to reinforce pupils' learning and raise standards. However, the rate of pupils' learning is sometimes slowed when a minority of pupils in classes of three year groups do not always receive enough focussed teaching at their own level when teachers have to deal with a very wide range of age and ability. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall.

- 74 The school has made a good level of improvement since the last inspection. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and is taught consistently throughout the school. Teachers have received up-to-date training to improve their skills. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are good. Individual targets are improving achievement. However, the tracking and monitoring of individual progress through the school is not as well developed. Improvements in the provision for English are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. The subjects is well led and in a good position to continue to improve.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 75 Numbers of pupils in each year group are too small to allow a reliable analysis of the National Curriculum test results in any one year. Taking the results over the past four years, attainment by the age of eleven is rising and is in line with the national average. The only exception to the rising trend was in 1998, when two potentially higher attaining pupils (20 per cent of those eligible) were absent for the tests. Overall results are improving at a slightly higher rate than national results. By the age of seven, the trend over four years indicates that attainment is around the national average. Girls achieve higher standards in tests than boys do at the end of both key stages, and the difference is higher than that found nationally. However, these differences were not seen in pupils' work, or in lessons during the inspection. National test results support the inspection judgement that attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average at the end of both key stages.
- 76 Targets are set for pupils' achievements which are challenging, requiring a good degree of commitment from teachers and pupils, and realistic, because they are based on pupils' earlier achievements. The school is on track to meet the targets for this year.
- 77 By the age of seven, attainment is in line with the national average. Higher attaining pupils handle number well, largely because the work they are given to do is planned in the light of work they have already mastered. Pupils of average and below average attainment work successfully at the level appropriate to their ages. They have a secure grasp of how to make ten from three other numbers and many can respond quickly and accurately to questions such as '6 times 2' and 'multiply 9 by 2'. Most

pupils enjoy working with shape, especially in practical sessions, when their learning is at a good pace. They know the names and simple properties of circles, triangles and squares. Almost all pupils recognise coins up to 50p, can add two or more of them together and explain how they did so. Higher attaining pupils recognise and can name fractions such as  $\frac{2}{5}$  and know that  $\frac{3}{6}$  is the same as one-half. Most pupils can collect and present data in the form of simple graphs. They can measure using a ruler and have the understanding and confidence to say that something is 'Five centimetres and a bit' when they see that it is more than five but less than six centimetres.

- 78 By the age of eleven, most pupils handle number well, because number work is thoroughly and interestingly taught. For example, pupils in upper Key Stage 2 give rapid and accurate answers when doubling numbers into three-digits. Many such skills are developed in stimulating lessons in which the acquisition of knowledge and skills is presented as a challenge or a game. Pupils are often enthusiastic in these situations and work hard to improve their earlier performance. They collect simple data and present it in graphical forms; many are able to discuss whether, for example, a pie-chart or a block graph will be easier to understand, bearing in mind the nature of the information being collected. Most pupils are able to interpret graphs and draw appropriate conclusions. Their understanding of shapes and their properties is at a generally average level. Higher attaining pupils, for example, can calculate the angles formed when the sides of a regular six-sided shape are joined to the central point. Pupils of average and above average attainment can give clear accounts of their thinking – for example, in order to explain the method they used to subtract 216 degrees from 360 in order to calculate an angle at the centre of a circle. Almost all pupils use confidently and accurately, measures of length, mass and capacity; they handle work in litres, metres, centimetres, grams and kilograms at a level expected for pupils of their age.
- 79 The quality of teaching and learning is sound in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. In many sessions, pupils make good progress in their learning because work is carefully and expertly planned. Teachers explain clearly what is being learned and use well-chosen resources in order to support learning. Pupils respond warmly to teachers' sense of humour and the occasional light touch enhances the positive learning atmosphere. In group sessions, the younger pupils' abilities to relate well to and co-operate with others develop alongside the benefits to older pupils, who show a responsible and caring attitude to the younger ones. Particularly in the middle class, which contains pupils from both key stages, teachers are presented with difficulties in matching the mathematics to the learning needs of all pupils. They do this best in question and answer sessions, when they match questions well to the level of the individual's understanding. Teaching is less effective during whole-class instruction when either the higher or the lower attainers lose concentration.
- 80 Pupils with special educational needs, throughout the school, make good progress towards the carefully designed learning targets in their individual learning plans. This is mainly because they are integrated fully into the work of their classes and often receive a good level of support from ancillary assistants and teachers. On occasions when the assistant sits with pupils and quietly reinforces the teacher's explanation, this makes a substantial impact on learning.
- 81 Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained, and the provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. Teaching is well organised. Learning resources are of good quality and are used well, especially with young children, to enhance learning.

- 82 The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has ensured that the overall provision for the subject is better than it was. The curriculum, lesson planning and pupils' progress are now monitored effectively. Overall, there has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection.

## **SCIENCE**

- 83 The number of pupils in each year group is too small to allow a reliable analysis of the school's National Curriculum test results for any one year. However, putting together the results over the past four years, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the national average and have been rising faster than the national rate. Girls reach higher standards than boys in the tests but this was not seen in lessons or in pupils' work. Inspection evidence confirms that attainment in science, at the end of Key Stage 2, is in line with the national average. Teacher assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 shows well above average attainment last year. Inspection evidence shows that current attainment is in line with the national expectation.
- 84 The school sets realistic but demanding targets for pupils' achievements by the age of eleven and is on course to meet the current targets.
- 85 Pupils in Key Stage 1 have benefited from a focus on investigative work and reach sound standards when, for example, conducting experiments into what bean plants need in order to grow well. The work in this project was enhanced by the link made through drama with the story of Jack and the Beanstalk; the enthusiasm generated added considerably to the pace of learning in both subjects. Almost all pupils are able to describe the characteristics of soils and rocks, and classify them at a simple level. This understanding contributed well to high quality work in geography during which pupils explored the route of the River Trent and why it follows the course it does. Pupils can plan simple experiments and understand what makes a fair test. They know that for electricity to flow there must be a complete electrical circuit and a source of power, such as a battery. They know that electricity can be powerful and dangerous.
- 86 By the age of eleven, pupils reach generally average standards across a rich and interestingly taught science curriculum. Pupils reach good standards in their investigative work, as a result of good provision for this aspect of the subject. In the study of life processes and living things, pupils develop sound skills in identifying and classifying flowers and leaves collected from the school's rich immediate environment. A lesson in upper Key Stage 2 typified some of the best work; pupils were motivated by the many different types of leaves provided by the teacher, the well-prepared worksheets and the teacher's high expectations of their capabilities. They concentrated and behaved very well, so that learning was at a brisk pace. Higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of the life cycle of many creatures. They talk knowledgeably about a food web, which maps out how different creatures feed on plant life and each other. Pupils understand electrical circuits well enough to use them to make quiz boards, which rely on a bulb being lit when the correct contacts are made as questions are answered correctly. Their understanding of magnetism, gravity and how sound and light travel are all at a satisfactory level.
- 87 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as a result of carefully worked out individual education plans and sensitive support from teachers and classroom assistants.

- 88 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages, leading to learning which is sound overall, and sometimes good. Teachers have benefited from training in investigative work. The practical approach to teaching science includes educational visits, to a large supermarket in connection with a healthy eating project, for example. Pupils talk enthusiastically about science walks, which make a positive contribution to learning. Teaching is generally of a good quality, with well-planned work that is matched to pupils' learning needs and is interestingly presented. Progress is good in upper Key Stage 2, and satisfactory in the rest of the school. The difference is largely explained by the difficulties that teachers experience in matching work to pupils' needs when three age groups are present and when, in one class, numbers are relatively high. As in other subjects, pupils' social development during science lessons is enhanced by well-planned group-work. Moral development is also supported by topics that look at environmental issues.
- 89 Since the last inspection there have been marked improvements in lesson planning, teaching and in monitoring overall provision in order to identify where improvements are needed. Lesson plans now include clear descriptions of what pupils are to learn. Monitoring the way that the subject was being presented identified a lack of practical and investigative work; this has now been substantially improved. Much of the impetus for improvement comes from the leadership provided by the co-ordinator, a science specialist, and from staff teamwork. The subject has benefited from teachers' determination that substantial work on mathematics and English should not prevent improvements to science teaching. The overall level of improvement is high.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 90 Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, except in the aspects of monitoring and data handling, where standards remain below expectations.
- 91 The attainment of seven-year-olds is in line with the national expectation. Pupils write short pieces of text, such as a poem. They know how this can be saved and retrieved. Pupils use a graphics program effectively to create pictures and patterns, and to illustrate their work. They know that the floor robot can be controlled by programming and learn how to control it using simple programs. Pupils have experience of programs which model the real world, such as 'Dressing Teddy', where younger children learn about dressing appropriately for the weather. They are adept at playing adventure games, such as those designed to develop mathematical skills. They have some general knowledge and understanding of the use of technology in the real world, such as tape recorders, videos and the use of the Internet. However, their experience of representing information in graphic form, such as pictograms, is limited.
- 92 The attainment of eleven-year-olds is below that expected for their age in some aspects of the subject. Pupils' word-processing skills are satisfactory. They can produce pieces of writing, such as letters, poems and stories, using different fonts and sizes of text. They can save, retrieve and redraft their work and can illustrate it using clip art. Pupils' knowledge about designing and creating a page, such as making a poster, or designing a birthday card, is satisfactory. Their knowledge and understanding of using data handling programs is underdeveloped. Pupils can research information from a CD-ROM, about the human body, for example, but have no experience of creating their own multimedia presentation. They know about the Internet and understand it is a worldwide source of information. Some pupils have experience of the Internet at home. They demonstrate a sound knowledge and

understanding of the use of technology in the real world, such as video recorders, play stations and electronic mail. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of control technology are limited. They understand two-dimensional control, such as using directions in adventure programs, but have too limited experience of three-dimensional control, and using a computer-controlled sensor to measure and record temperature, for example. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to learn. They behave well, take turns and help each other. They are interested in their work and can concentrate for a good length of time. This contributes to their personal development.

- 93 As very little teaching of the subject was seen during the inspection it was not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Teachers are aware of equality of opportunity and make sure that all boys and girls, including those with special educational needs have a fair turn. Training in recent years has made teachers more knowledgeable and confident in the subject, and this is having a positive impact on raising standards of attainment throughout the school. The small amount of teaching seen was effective, with good, clear explanations and the right amount of support to help pupils learn at a good pace. Planning for computers to be used in other subjects varies from teacher to teacher and subject to subject. Nevertheless, pupils' learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and is resulting in better standards of attainment.
- 94 The school has made good improvement in provision for the subject since the last inspection. The school development plan addresses the remaining weaknesses. A co-ordinator has been appointed and trained, the staff received whole school training and up-to-date resources were purchased. The government guidance for a scheme of work is followed to help teachers pitch the work at the right level. The parents' association takes an interest in the subject and supports initiatives to increase parents' understanding of the subject, as well as that of the pupils. The school is to connect to the local authority's Intranet shortly, so that pupils will have controlled access to the Internet on the National Grid for Learning. The school is in a good position to continue to improve.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 95 Standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education at both Key Stages. By the age of seven, pupils develop a concept of God as the Creator. They develop a concept of 'special', such as when looking at, and talking about a very young baby; they know that there are 'special' people, like Jesus and the Saints, who are central to religious faiths. Pupils are familiar with, and can re-tell, stories from the Bible, such as the story of the Nativity
- 96 By the time they leave the school, at the age of eleven, pupils have developed a sound knowledge and understanding of the world faiths of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They understand the significance of religious traditions and learn about practices, customs and celebrations within the three faiths. They appreciate the importance of symbols, such as the cross, and the role they play in worship. Pupils value and respect religious traditions other than their own.
- 97 Pupils develop their appreciation of elements common to many faiths, such as festivals, rituals, holy books and important personalities in religious history. Assemblies are well used to develop a sense of reverence and respect for religious values and beliefs.

- 98 Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject. They become involved and show interest in the lessons. Some older pupils demonstrate a capacity for empathy, which is apparent in their writing about a Bah Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah, for example. Pupils respond very well to teachers' stimulating questioning by thinking hard and expressing their thoughts readily.
- 99 Teaching and learning are generally good. Teachers plan carefully with clear objectives and provide appropriate resources and activities for the range of pupils in the class, including those with special educational needs. They build good relationships with the pupil in their class, sharing their thoughts and beliefs so as to promote open discussion. Teachers use questioning well to stimulate and extend pupils' thinking. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed in these sessions. Teachers make good use of local places of worship to enhance the curriculum. The vicar is a welcome visitor to school. His stories are enjoyed by everyone.
- 100 The school has maintained a satisfactory provision in line with the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education since the last inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

## **ART**

- 101 Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the age of seven, pupils' work in paint, pastel and crayon shows growing control. For example, a pencil portrait is strikingly effective in representing facial features. Younger pupils study the work of artists such as Van Gogh, learning lessons in line, shape and colour which they readily apply to their own work. They experiment with three-dimensional work, building models and sculptures with boxes, card and plastic.
- 102 By the age of eleven, the range of pupils' attainment is typical for their age. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, become increasingly skilled in using a range of art materials. For example, a pencil sketch of farm buildings by an older child includes careful detail and effectively represents shade and texture. Pupils learn a variety of artistic techniques, such as building layers of colour wash to make a dramatic background for a ship at sea, or applying cut out pictures on a painted background to make a contemporary collage. They study artists of the French Impressionist movement and experiment with techniques such as pointillism. However, pupils' work in three-dimensions is under-represented.
- 103 Pupils throughout the school enjoy art, especially painting. They work confidently, building up a personal portfolio of varied and interesting work.
- 104 Too little teaching was seen at the time of the inspection to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. Pupils' work shows progress in skills, they use progressively more sophisticated techniques, but also demonstrates a noticeable overlap between art and design and technology where the subjects sometimes become confused. Art on display around the school includes a very small number of prints, such as a set of Celtic prints on display in the library, but these are not labelled to enable pupils to learn from them. No one teacher is responsible for co-ordinating the subject. The responsibility is shared and the subject is appropriately planned so that pupils make satisfactory progress. The school has successfully maintained the provision for art whilst prioritising other subjects.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 105 Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the age of seven, pupils gain knowledge and skills suitable for their age. Younger pupils design and make celebration cards using different techniques - for example, one child's Mother's Day card shaped and decorated with tissue paper to look like a bowl of hyacinths, inscribed 'I am happy when my mummy runs my bathwater.' Easter cards use a simple lever to show, for example, a chicken hatching out of an egg. Millennium calendars are decorated with beautifully embroidered hessian panels, featuring stitching, sequin and beadwork. Pupils design more challenging constructions, such as boxes, which they successfully make in three dimensions. They enjoy regular opportunities to build with construction kits and become skilled in this.
- 106 When the pupils leave the school their knowledge and understanding of the technology process is typical for eleven-year-olds. Pupils' work demonstrates expected levels of knowledge and skill. Pupils design and make artefacts in card, plastic, fabric and wood, using a variety of techniques in shaping, joining, fastening and finishing. Older pupils design and make artefacts such as bird masks, using circular joining techniques for the beak and a mosaic of coloured paper to make a bright, attractive finish. Games that feature flashing lights are well made, imaginative, individual and carefully finished. Pupils are becoming more skilled in drawing designs as they develop their ability to translate two-dimensional drawings into three-dimensional models. Pupils use computers appropriately for tasks such as designing and printing a poster.
- 107 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers introduce the lessons well, making sure pupils, including those with special educational needs, know what they are doing and build on pupils' previous experience. Tasks are chosen to complement other work happening at the time so pupils see a purpose for their design. Pupils enjoy the subject and respond well to design challenges. They express ideas with confidence. Teachers' planning clearly shows the point of the lesson and sets appropriate activities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding at the right level. Lessons are well managed. Pupils show interest, co-operate well together and work hard. They take a good level of responsibility for organising themselves and tidying up. The range of activities provided covers the curriculum requirements but tends to be restricted to everyday tools and materials.
- 108 The school has maintained a satisfactory provision for design and technology since the last inspection. Planning for the subject has improved and is now more consistent. Although there is no named co-ordinator for the subject, teachers have worked together to make sure pupils make appropriate progress in each class.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 109 Standards are in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and above the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2. An effectively planned and well-taught curriculum enables pupils to build well on earlier learning, make good progress and reach good standards by the age of eleven. An example of this approach is seen in their study of rivers. At the age of seven, pupils know the approximate course of the river Trent and understand that the type of rocks and land formations through which it flows have influenced its course. They classify rocks using appropriate simple terms. They can identify the Pennines and some of the major places through which the Trent flows. By the age of eleven, most pupils use



confidently and accurately terms such as 'source', tributary', 'meander' and 'estuary'. Pupils of higher and average attainment can explain these and identify them on maps. Almost all pupils can relate the terms to the Amazon, which they have studied, and locate the river accurately, along with other geographical features of South America. They understand how the river, land formations and weather influence the lives of local people.

- 110 By the age of eleven, most pupils have a good understanding of an appropriately wide range of geographical topics. They know where the world's main areas of rainforest, desert, ice and rivers are. Higher attaining pupils develop relatively sophisticated arguments against damaging rain forests. They also explain some of the opposing views that could be made by local people because of, for example, their basic need for food and shelter.
- 111 Teaching is good throughout the school. Learning is sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teaching is well planned, drawing on teachers' sound subject knowledge. Teachers' introductions to lessons are usually clear and often thought provoking; pupils respond well to this, listen carefully, behave well and work hard. Pupils' learning is enhanced by educational visits, including a residential visit to Ross-on-Wye that takes place every two years. Learning resources are of good quality and used well. Stimulating links are made with other subjects, including speaking and listening in informal debates, and writing, such as, when pupils write in the style of a newspaper report about the potential dangers of vehicles speeding through their village. This approach develops pupils' confidence and social and moral awareness as well as their geographical understanding and their speaking, listening and writing skills.
- 112 The subject has no teacher identified as co-ordinator. However, all teachers' co-operate well in order to ensure that the curriculum is well planned and stimulatingly presented. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in curriculum planning, teaching and the overall standards reached at the age of eleven. This good rate of improvement has been achieved largely because of good teamwork by the staff, as they plan the curriculum to be covered and how it should be matched to the needs of the pupils.

## **HISTORY**

- 113 Standards are in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and above the national expectation at end of Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, higher attaining pupils master a good number of complex ideas, largely because demanding work is set for them; this is most true of the younger pupils in each of the three mixed-age-group classes. By the age of eleven, pupils have studied a wide range of historical topics' often at a relatively sophisticated level. These include work on Victorian Britain, during which many effective links are made with other subjects. Pupils use computers to discover relevant information, for example, on the life and work of nineteenth century composers. They study literature in order to bring the period to life. Pupils understand the background to child labour and the working conditions for children seen in Charles Dickens' and Robert Louis Stevenson's writing, relating it effectively to information found in reference books. In work on more recent times, pupils are able to formulate perceptive questions to put to older adults, so that they begin to understand the background to their comments, such as 'We never used to lock the door when we went out' and 'We used the News of the World as loo-paper'. Pupils enjoy the subject and are generally well motivated to work.

- 114 The quality of teaching is good, and the quality of learning is sound, in both key stages. The imaginative approach to the subject by teachers excites pupils' interest and contributes substantially to the good progress that is often made, especially in upper Key Stage 2. Teachers know the subject well and plan effectively. Resources are usually chosen well in order to illustrate the intended learning. Teachers mark work carefully and pupils' learning benefits considerably from the written guidance given. The bulk of the progress made by pupils is in the top two years of Key Stage 2. Even though most aspects of their teaching are good, pupils in the Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 classes make steady rather than good overall progress. The wide spread of attainment and maturity when classes contain three age groups presents problems with whole class instruction, which are not always overcome. However, the hard work of teachers, their good overall approach to the subject and the good relationships that they have with pupils result in sound standards of attainment.
- 115 Whilst there is no one member of staff identified to lead the subject, the whole-staff approach is effective in ensuring that teachers understand the subject and that work is well organised. Good use of educational visits to museums and places connected to work in progress give added interest and contribute substantially to standards.
- 116 There has been a good measure of improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen. Higher attaining pupils are now reaching good standards. Pupils with special educational needs continue to benefit from support from ancillary assistants and are well motivated and work hard. The curriculum now focuses better on the knowledge, understanding and skills to be taught from one year to the next.

## **MUSIC**

- 117 The standards reached at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national expectation and at the end of Key Stage 2, they are good. By the age of seven, pupils sing out with enthusiasm, have a secure grasp of simple rhythms, and are starting to learn conventional notation. By the age of eleven, pupils sing enthusiastically in two or more parts, controlling their breathing and pitch well. They perform pieces which they have composed themselves confidently and accurately. Pupils listen attentively to the teacher, then reproduce accurately, and elaborate on, rhythms using percussion instruments or clapping. Older pupils understand how music can be used to convey different feelings, whether this be in a Ralph McTell song in assembly or when they compose and practice their own accompaniments to 'Lord of the Dance'.
- 118 The good standards reached are largely as a result of good teaching, especially in Key Stage 2. The teacher, who knows the pupils well because she teaches all three classes, builds on earlier learning very effectively. Lessons are characterised by very good relationships; for example, when they are composing, pupils listen carefully to ideas offered by the teacher or other pupils. They draw on these ideas, improvise thoughtfully and agree sensibly how they will phrase the piece, and practise responsibly. This well planned group work makes a significant contribution to pupils' social development. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and puts proper emphasis on the use of correct musical terms, so that many pupils are able to use them accurately. All pupils learn to play the recorder. They are introduced to and learn to read musical notation and tonic-soh-fa; this is put to good use in later work. The subject contributes to work in other subjects and to pupils' cultural developments. For example, in a history project on the Victorians, pupils used C-D ROM to research into the background of composers such as Elgar and Delius. Computer programs are also used effectively to help pupils to write their own compositions. Well-chosen music

from other cultures is used in assemblies, and the way in which this is discussed ensures that it makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

119 Teaching and learning are supported by a useful scheme of work. Pupils' interest and motivation are enhanced by additional activities such as visits to hear a string quartet or by pupils performing in musical festivals held in nearby towns. The performances they give for local audiences help the school's relationships with the community.

120 There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Improved planning leads to improvements in teaching and pupils reaching better standards.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

121 Overall standards at the end of both key stages are in line with the national expectation, whilst standards in swimming are high. Most pupils move with good control in gymnastics although a small number of pupils do not control their landings well when they jump from large apparatus. Eleven-year-old pupils are able to plan small group work that links movements together, often very successfully. Many pupils are able to explain the reasons for choosing their sequences, discuss them with other pupils or the teacher and incorporate the ideas of others in their work. This is especially successful when the teacher organises a group to demonstrate their work and encourages other pupils to comment and suggest improvements. Pupils accept the comments of others with considerable maturity. On these occasions pupils' learn at an impressive rate. Ball control skills are in line with the national expectation. Throwing, catching, kicking, striking and stopping a ball are all, in general, at around the nationally expected level. A few pupils are very skilled and are taught in ways which encourage their skill development whilst others struggle to follow the flight of a ball. Attainment in swimming is high largely because all pupils, from the age of four upwards, have a weekly swimming lesson of half an hour. This entails them being out of school for two hours or more each week. Whilst standards in swimming benefit and social relationships between the age groups are enhanced, the time spent – ten per cent of teaching time per year - is not proportionate to the benefits gained.

122 The quality of teaching and pupils' responses are generally satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, pupils' work rate is high, so that their learning progresses well. Lessons are well planned. On many occasions, teachers prepare the hall, in their break times, with a good deal of large apparatus ready for immediate use; on these occasions, pupils can begin demanding work quickly and no time is lost. On other occasions, teachers organise pupils to set up or put away apparatus in order to ensure that important lessons regarding safety are properly learned. They strike a good balance between the two approaches. Teachers organise a small number of clubs, such as football, which enhance pupils' skills and encourage their ability and wish to work as members of a team.

123 Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its sound provision for the subject and standards remain in line with the national expectation.