

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BASSINGHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bassingham, Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120370

Headteacher: Mr. P. Hickman

Reporting inspector: Mrs. R.J.Andrew  
21460

Dates of inspection: 6–10 March 2000

Inspection number: 192049

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Lincoln Road Bassingham Lincoln
Postcode:	LN5 9HQ
Telephone number:	01522788395
Fax number:	01522 788395
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. P. White
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Rachael Andrew	Registered inspector	English	What sort of School is it?
		Religious education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
		Music	How well are pupils taught?
		Under fives	What should the school do to improve further?
Stuart Vincent	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		History	
Joe Peacock	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well is the school led and managed?
		Information technology	
		Geography	
		Physical education	
		Equal opportunities	
		Special educational	

		needs	
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The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This rural, community primary school has 188 pupils, boys and girls aged 4-11, on roll. Most of the pupils come from the village of Bassingham and four other nearby villages, although 37 per cent are drawn from outside the catchment area as a result of parental choice. The school's roll has risen over recent years. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. The backgrounds of the pupils are mixed but many of them are favourable. Only three per cent is known to be eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average but, as the local education authority only provides a sandwich meal for those eligible, the statistics may not be reliable. Pupils are admitted into the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 17 children under five years of age. Attainment on entry is average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs including statements is, at 15 per cent, below the national average. It has risen significantly in recent years. Many of these pupils are in Key Stage 2 and have transferred from other schools at a relatively late stage in their primary schooling.

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

This is a good school, where pupils are keen to learn and achieve high standards as a result of good teaching. The management of the school under the leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school has the means to do this and provides good value for money. The school's strengths greatly outweigh its weaknesses.

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

- The quality of teaching is good and a significant amount is very good.
- Effective learning takes place and most pupils make good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Lower attaining pupils do particularly well.
- There is very good provision for children under five in the reception class ensuring firm foundations for future learning and a confident start to school life.
- Most pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave well.
- The headteacher provides effective leadership and is well supported by the governing body.

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

- In some subjects, especially science, geography, history and religious education, the work pupils undertake does not build carefully enough on earlier learning and this affects progress adversely.
- In science at both key stages and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 the work is insufficiently demanding to ensure that the achievements of some higher attaining pupils are high enough.
- Pupils' skills in information technology are not being used consistently and regularly to support work in 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 was last inspected in November 1996. It has made a satisfactory response to the issues identified at that time. There are now effective systems for assessing attainment and tracking pupils' progress. The school has formulated a policy for personal, social and health education. The impact is more evident in some classes than in others. A further strengthening of the status of personal and social education in the curriculum would benefit pupils. The information provided for parents in the Governors' Annual Report is still incomplete and falls short of the statutory requirements.

The quality of teaching remains high and this is a strength of the school. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Effective measures are in place to monitor quality and evaluate developments. This has been successful in maintaining high standards in English and mathematics. There is a school-wide commitment to high standards and the necessary systems are in place to secure further improvements. Most parents are satisfied with what the school provides. There has however been a slight fall in the standards the pupils achieve in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and in science at the end of Key Stage 2 .

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The similar schools comparison in the table above may not be reliable as comparisons are made using statistics based on free school meals. As the local education authority provides eligible pupils with a sandwich meal only, take up rates may be low.

The table above shows that in science standards are above the national average and in English and mathematics they are well above the national average. When compared to schools with pupils of similar backgrounds, standards are average in English and mathematics but below average in science. This resulted from the fact that although all pupils achieved the expected Level 4 in science, a relatively small proportion achieved the higher Level 5. Taking the three subjects together the slightly upward trend over four years matched the national trend. Inspection findings indicate that standards in all three subjects remain above average and that pupils in the current Year 6 are likely to achieve the targets the school has set. These are lower than last year and appropriately reflect the higher proportion of pupils in the class with special educational needs. A few higher attaining pupils could achieve more in science.

The results of national tests for seven year olds show that standards in reading are well above the national average and well above other similar schools. In writing standards are above the national average and in line with other similar schools. In mathematics standards are in line with the national average and below other similar schools. This reflects the fact that although almost all pupils attained the expected Level 2 a relatively small proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3. Teacher assessments in science indicate a similar picture with all pupils attaining Level 2 but a relatively small proportion attaining Level 3. Inspection findings confirm the test results. Standards in reading are particularly high. The achievements of average and lower attaining pupils are good but a few higher attaining pupils could do better in mathematics and science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and concentrate on their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are pleasant and helpful and respond promptly to teachers' instructions.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils grow in confidence and independence. They relate very well to each other and to adults.
Attendance	Above average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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 teaching was satisfactory or better in all of the lessons observed. In eight out of ten lessons the teaching was good or better and in three out of ten lessons it was very good. The proportion of good lessons compares favourably with that found in other schools nationally. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good in both key stages. Basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy are taught thoroughly. Teachers' planning ensures that most pupils make good progress in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Sometimes the work for higher attaining pupils is not challenging enough in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and science in both key stages. Teachers' relationships with their pupils are very good. They manage pupils well and have high expectations of them. Pupils respond by behaving well, working hard and learning effectively. Teachers do not provide adequate opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The provision for children under five is very good. Language, literacy and social and personal development are particular strengths. In Key Stages 1 and 2 there is a strong emphasis on English and mathematics. The provision for art and physical education is good and leads to high standards. Most other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are given adequate attention although the quality of the provision for geography is relatively weak. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have appropriate targets, are supported well in lessons and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and they are encouraged to become independent from an early age. The spiritual and cultural dimensions of pupils' learning are satisfactory overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. It monitors their attendance, behaviour, academic progress and personal development carefully.

There is an effective partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well. His management is effective in implementing new initiatives and in maintaining high standards. Other teachers with management responsibilities support him well. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science monitor teaching and learning but there are no such opportunities for other subject co-ordinators. There is no representation from Key Stage 1 on the senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The headteacher works closely with governors in a successful management partnership. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities competently although there are some omissions in their annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates how effective it has been in implementing priorities in the school development plan. The analysis of pupils' results and the monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics provide useful information about strengths and areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Teachers and learning support staff are deployed to good effect. Learning resources are used well to support pupils' learning. Specific grants are used appropriately. The principles of best value are applied in spending decisions. There is currently an unacceptably large budget surplus.

The accommodation is good, although mobile classrooms cause some difficulties with access to the hall, toilets and the library, especially in bad weather. The quality and range of books in the library are unsatisfactory. There are too few computers or appropriate software to support the use of information technology in all subjects of the curriculum.

## 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>• The standards and progress achieved.</li> <li>• The good standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• The approachability of staff.</li> <li>• That the school expects children to work hard and be responsible.</li> <li>• That the school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework, although there are conflicting views about this.</li> <li>• The amount of information about progress especially the timing of parents' consultation evenings.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection finds:

There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, although there is no information provided in the school brochure about the range offered.

The range and amount of homework are satisfactory but information about what pupils are expected to do is not always clear.

Information about progress is satisfactory, but the timing of parents' consultation evenings could be improved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment on entry to the reception class, as judged by baseline assessment, is average. By the time they are five most pupils attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all the areas of learning. Most of the children exceed them in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Many also exceed them in language and literacy and mathematics. By the end of their reception year most pupils are working on the early stages of the National Curriculum. The consistent high quality of the teaching results in very good achievements and progress over time.
2. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999 showed that the performance of pupils was:-
  - well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science;
  - broadly in line with pupils from similar backgrounds in English and mathematics but below average in science.
3. Based on the figures for the last four years, the slight upward trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. Girls outperformed boys in English by a wider margin than is found nationally, though both boys and girls did better than pupils in other schools nationally. The higher proportion of boys with special educational needs affects this. The proportion of pupils achieving a higher Level 5 in science was below the national average.
4. The findings of the inspection, based on the evidence of the pupils' completed work and the lessons observed indicate that standards are above average in all three subjects. The school is likely to meet its targets at the end of the year. These are lower than those set last year. This is appropriate and reflects the higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6.
5. The quality of the teaching is an important factor in the good progress most pupils make in English and mathematics throughout Key Stage 2. Effective daily, mental mathematics sessions make a strong contribution to pupils' facility with numbers and calculations. Well chosen texts and the teachers' skill in interpreting them and drawing pupils' attention to important differences in style, structure and content, improve pupils' reading skills, inform their writing and widen their vocabulary. Research skills are also developed well so that, by the time they leave the school, pupils are able to gain information from a range of texts. Many pupils, particularly average and lower-attaining pupils make good progress in science. All of them have achieved the expected Level 4 for several years. The work provided for higher attaining pupils is insufficiently demanding and for a small number of pupils achievement is not high enough. This results in a smaller proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in science than in mathematics or English.
6. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 1999 showed that the performance of pupils was:-
  - well above the national average in reading and well above the average for pupils from similar backgrounds;
  - above the national average in writing and broadly in line with pupils from similar backgrounds;
  - in line with the national average in mathematics but below the average for pupils from similar backgrounds.
7. The school's results show a slight improvement over three years in both reading and writing but a slight fall in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving a Level 3 in mathematics was below the national average. Inspection findings reflect test results.

8. High standards in reading and writing are maintained by the good teaching of basic skills in Key Stage 1. The good start that pupils make in reception and the support that lower attaining pupils receive from teachers and particularly from classroom assistants ensure that most pupils work to capacity. This results in almost all of them attaining the expected Level 2 in national tests at age 7. The work provided for higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science is insufficiently demanding. As a result, the achievements of a small number of pupils are not high enough. This is reflected in the relatively small proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 at the end of the key stage. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress in English, mathematics and science. Their progress in other subjects is similar to that of other pupils.
10. Achievements are high in art and physical education at both key stages and in history and information technology at Key Stage 1. Good opportunities are provided to teach skills in art and history alongside information, making maximum use of the time now available for foundation subjects.
11. In other subjects, pupils' attainments are broadly similar to those found in other schools. The work provided does not always build on earlier work. This results from schemes of work that have not been slimmed down systematically to take account of the smaller amount of time available for foundation subjects since the introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. Teachers do not always provide work to stretch higher-attaining pupils. As a result their achievements in these subjects are not always high enough. Standards in most subjects have been maintained since the previous inspection, although there are signs of some falling standards for example in religious education and geography resulting from the smaller amount of time now available, since the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

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

12. The previous report was positive about the attitudes and behaviour of pupils and this continues to be the case.
13. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work as well as their extra-curricular activities and clubs. During lessons and in discussions they enjoy explaining about their work and are confident to ask questions and express opinions. They listen well to instructions from adults and are keen to succeed. Parents confirm that their children enjoy coming to school. There was one exclusion during the last year. There is no unauthorised absence and attendance is above the national average.
14. The majority of pupils behave very well in the classroom, as well as around the school and the playground. They are courteous and show respect to adults and their surroundings. Just a few of the older pupils occasionally show a lack of respect for their teachers and are a little casual in their manner. There are very few instances of unacceptable behaviour or bullying and when this occasionally happens it is dealt with effectively. The pupils themselves say that the school is a friendly place to be. Relationships at all levels are very good.
15. Pupils' personal development is good. They enter the reception class with social skills which are in line with national expectations. As they progress through the school they are increasingly able to work co-operatively with their peers. They work in pairs and groups, learning to share and take their turn and enjoy showing their work in front of the class. A wide range of duties is willingly undertaken in the classrooms, library and in the playground. Older pupils are particularly helpful to teachers and take on wider responsibilities, such as helping with the younger children. The Bassingham Environment Company (BEC) is well-known in the community and is active in promoting the improvement of the environment and re-cycling. They are currently working on a project to improve playground facilities. This provides these pupils with good opportunities to take responsibility and to show initiative.

16. Older pupils are increasingly involved in agreeing their own personal targets for development and by the time they leave the school, they are suitably prepared for secondary education.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. Eight out of ten lessons observed during the inspection were good and three out of ten were very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The quality of the teaching is fundamental to effective learning and the good progress pupils make, their positive attitudes to school and the high standards they achieve. High quality teaching has been maintained since the last inspection, whilst there have been significant changes to the teaching staff.
18. The teaching of pupils under five is very good. The reception teacher has a very good understanding of how young children learn and of the areas of learning in the under five's curriculum. Her planning achieves a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for independent learning and structured play. Activities are well matched to the needs of different groups within the class, established through careful consideration of assessment information. This leads to children making good and frequently very good progress. Very good use is made of the experienced and knowledgeable classroom assistant to support groups of children as they work. Frequent opportunities are made by both adults to extend children's learning by skilful questioning. They engage children in conversation about their work and encourage them to consider different approaches and how to check their work. For example, when the children sequence sentences to match a story heard in the literacy hour, they are encouraged, not only to refer to the original text, but also to read from the beginning, as each sentence is added, to check the sense. At the end of the task, all the children in the group succeeded in completing the story accurately. They had all practised and refined their reading skills, learnt new words and built on their understanding of story structure. Other children at an earlier stage of learning sequenced the story by drawing, writing the names of the animals encountered and checking the initial letter sounds of each one. Basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are taught very well, consolidated regularly and built up steadily and this provides the children with a firm foundation for future learning.
19. Both the teacher and classroom assistant seek to develop children's personal and social skills by the example they set and by seizing opportunities to promote skills as they arise in the classroom. This results, for example, in children being aware of other pupils working when they go to the hall for physical education lessons, being thoughtful and sympathetic when children are unwell or hurt, and being aware of the need to look after equipment and to tidy up. Relationships in the classroom are very good. The management of the children is firm but unobtrusive and expectations are high. As a result, the children are happy and confident and keen to learn. They concentrate hard, learn effectively and take a pride in their work.
20. The quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall and frequently very good. There is a high level of consistency in different classes and across subjects. Evidence from pupils' completed work and from lessons indicates that the teaching of English and mathematics is good and basic skills are taught particularly well. This leads to well above average standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. The teachers provide good support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Activities are well matched to their needs and appropriate time allowed for the consolidation of new skills. As a result almost all pupils achieve the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and the expected Level 4 in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics. There is sometimes insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1, in the activities provided for writing and mathematics. This results in a relatively small number of pupils attaining Level 3. Similarly at Key Stage 2, good teaching ensures that all pupils achieve the expected Level 4 in science but a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils results in a relatively small proportion attaining Level 5.
21. The teachers use the structure recommended in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. They have good subject knowledge. There is often very good explanation of new learning in the whole-class session. This results in pupils exchanging information, asking relevant questions and showing an interest in trying out ideas. In mathematics there is good teaching of mental skills and strategies for calculation. Pupils

confidently explain how they approach problems and are willing to take risks and to learn from them. In English, texts are well chosen and used effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge of different types of writing and to extend their reading skills. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and provide activities for independent work that build on whole-class teaching. Particularly good use is made of the plenary session to check understanding and to deal with misconceptions.

22. The teaching of science ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are given appropriate attention. Teachers support average and lower attaining pupils well. The work planned does not always take account of the needs of different groups within the class and provides insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. As a result, although all pupils achieve at least average levels, relatively few attain higher levels at the end of either key stage.
23. The teaching of information technology skills leads to satisfactory standards at Key stage 1 and good standards at Key Stage 2. Teachers' planning however does not put pupils' skills to use to support their work in other subjects of the curriculum with any degree of consistency. There is an underlying lack of confidence and knowledge of appropriate software that works against this. Furthermore, the resources for information technology, both the number of computers and a range of suitable programs, are inadequate.
24. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan their lessons well to use stories or pupils' own experiences as a starting point for each theme. This succeeds in engaging pupils' interests and provides relevance to their lives. Not all teachers have a good understanding of the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus. They do not, for example, always make clear enough the links between starting points and the religious concepts outlined in the syllabus. There is effective teaching of the knowledge of the major faiths. This provides pupils with good opportunities to compare and contrast festivals of light, harvest celebrations, signs and symbols, for example.
25. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching in music. The teaching in all other subjects enables pupils to develop their ideas effectively and acquire new skills and understanding. There is particularly good teaching of art and physical education that results in above average standards in these subjects in both key stages. Expectations are high and there is good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Effective links are made between subjects and opportunities are made to promote literacy and numeracy in subjects other than English and mathematics. Literacy, particularly reading skills is promoted more frequently than numeracy skills. For example pupils use numerical data only occasionally in geography and science, but there are many opportunities to use research skills. In some lessons, the use of worksheets, although of good quality and often designed by teachers, restricts opportunities for extended writing.
26. Teachers manage pupils well and relationships in the classroom are very good. Pupils respond by concentrating hard, working productively and meeting the targets for the lesson.
27. Teachers set regular homework, reading and spelling at Key Stage 1 and in addition regular mathematics and English homework and occasional research at Key Stage 2. Homework successfully consolidates work done in the classroom and provides practice in basic skills. There were conflicting views at the parents' meeting about homework. Whilst some parents felt homework was sufficient and well focussed on individual needs others felt that in Year 6 pupils need to be better prepared for the quantity of homework given at secondary school.

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

28. Pupils are provided with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which reflects the aims of the school. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the teaching of English and mathematics. The school's planning and provision for teaching the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are good. However, insufficient time is given within the literacy hour to expressive writing. The provision made for physical education and art contributes to high standards. The introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy hours has reduced the amount of time being spent

on other subjects. It is no longer possible to teach all that is planned in the school's current schemes of work. Individual teachers have been left to decide what they can now cover and this has caused some gaps and repetition. This is particularly affecting the curriculum being taught in Religious Education, science, history and geography. As a result, pupils no longer make consistent progress as they move through the school and high standards have not been maintained in these subjects. Pupils have the opportunity to study all aspects of the National Curriculum for information technology. It is used infrequently and inconsistently, however, to support the work in other subjects. The school realises the need to ensure that information technology is used across the curriculum to benefit pupils' learning.

29. The quality and range of the curriculum provided for those pupils who are under five are very good. The curriculum includes all the areas of learning specified in national guidance and places an appropriate emphasis on their personal and social development.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Information about the pupils and assessments of their needs is used to ensure an appropriate curriculum and levels of support. The good standards of pupils' achievements in reading and writing ensure that they have equality of access to the whole curriculum.
31. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. These currently include football, netball, drama, chess, recorder and computer clubs. In the summer other sports are included. The quality of these activities ensures that they are popular with the pupils who attend some, for example drama club, in large numbers.
32. Visits to support the curriculum make a good contribution to pupils' learning and the standards achieved especially in history. As part of their history and geography work, pupils are taken to places of interest such as Lincoln, to follow the Medieval and geography trails. They regularly visit the village to enhance their studies. The younger pupils have visited Twycross Zoo, White Post Farm and Pet's Mart to support work in science. Older pupils have the chance to undertake a residential activity that contributes to their personal and social development and sense of achievement. Pupils' involvement with the community is very good and provides constructive opportunities to support the curriculum and to promote their social development. The Bassingham Environmental Company, which consists of a group of interested and committed pupils, has planted bulbs and trees in the village. It has built and installed bird boxes and has taken part in a church project. Pupils at the school have also taken part in a community project that has involved them in producing mosaics that can be seen at various sites around the village, including the school entrance and the local pub. The school makes good use of the village 'Heritage Room', where, with the assistance of a representative of the local district council, the Environmental Company has set up its own web site. Year 4 pupils are currently producing guidebooks for children to use when visiting the village. These, along with some of their projects, will be available from the 'Heritage' room. The school also invites local artists and craftspeople in to share their skills. This has resulted in pupils learning about woodcarving, tapestry and mosaic making.
33. There are very constructive links with the playgroup, which meets in the school hall. Children who attend playgroup are familiar with the school and staff before they start their full-time education and this helps them to settle quickly into school routines. There are sound links with local secondary schools. The local cluster of primary schools works well together and this benefits both teachers and pupils.
34. The school has responded to the recommendations of the previous report and now has a policy for teaching personal, social and health education. Although it is not timetabled as a discrete subject, teachers plan such work into other subjects of the curriculum where relevant, for example in religious education when discussing leadership. This leads to some inconsistencies but on the whole the provision is sound. The school nurse visits to talk to Year 6 pupils about growing up and parents have the chance to view the material to be used. The governors have decided that there should be no formal provision for sex education except where it forms part of the National Curriculum, for example in science. Parents have not yet been formally consulted about their views on the matter as noted in the previous report.
35. Taken as a whole, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, the school has no policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality of the provision is very much dependent upon individual teachers. There is no

monitoring of the provision for these aspects in different subjects. As a result the school cannot ensure that all pupils share equally good experiences.

36. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to observe carefully the wonders of the natural world. For example, many pupils were fascinated by the sight of large numbers of frogs spawning in the school pond. Pupils in the reception class observed creatures in their classroom aquarium and were amazed at the way the water snails moved. In art pupils are encouraged to appreciate how the natural world inspires artists. Their own artistic endeavours are valued by teachers and displayed with great care. Some good opportunities are made to consider important issues such as the treatment of the Jews in mediaeval Lincoln and the current crisis in Mozambique. In religious education, pupils gain an understanding of the beliefs and values of the major faith groups. However many opportunities are missed to provide time for reflection on aspects of pupils' experiences and emotions. This is particularly the case in the daily act of worship, where the emphasis is on imparting knowledge rather than on reflection.
37. The daily act of worship fulfils statutory requirements. Pupils sing hymns with enjoyment and listen to stories that follow carefully planned themes. These cover different subjects such as relationships, stories from the Bible, the major Christian festivals and celebrations from other faiths, special people and acts of heroism. Pupils come into the hall to music but the atmosphere is not maintained as the material presented is often rushed and followed quickly by notices or accounts of sporting events. There is little attempt to enjoy the atmosphere the music creates, to make the occasion special by having a focal point, varying the way the pupils sit or by giving time for reflection on some of the important and appropriate subjects covered.
38. Provision for moral development is good. Personal behaviour is promoted well through the high expectations staff have. Pupils are taught from an early age what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour. They help to develop their classroom rules, which enables them to gain an understanding of the reasons for rules. In religious education lessons they discuss the qualities that make good leaders and consider the responsibilities that leadership brings. Pupils respond positively to praise and accept sanctions for unacceptable behaviour with good grace. Teachers and other adults provide good role model, valuing pupils as individuals. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into school activities and they enjoy mutual respect with others in the school.
39. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The ethos of the school enables pupils to work together well. The good provision for extra-curricular activities makes an effective contribution to social development through teamwork, particularly in sport, music and drama and through competing against other schools. Some parents feel that there should be more opportunities for younger pupils to be involved. There are many informal opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. The Bassingham Environmental Company provides a high level of responsibility for a small group of pupils in a more formal setting as well as taking on some of the function of a school council. It promotes a very good understanding of citizenship through some of the links with the community. Pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves through a range of charity fund raising activities. The annual residential visit for older pupils provides opportunities for them to be more independent and to cope with life away from home.
40. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to appreciate their own cultural heritage, especially through the study of history. An awareness of local heritage is fostered well through the study of the local area both as it is now and as it was in times past. Opportunities are missed in geography to learn in depth about the lives of people in contrasting locations in other countries. In art pupils become familiar with the work of famous artists and learn about art in non-western cultures. In music pupils are building a repertoire of songs from their own and other cultures. There are few opportunities in the curriculum to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society by learning about the lives of people of other cultures in Britain.

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

41. The attention given to the care and wellbeing of its pupils is a strength of the school and is based upon the very good relationships which exist at all levels.
42. Procedures are in place to ensure health and safety are dealt with effectively. Responsibilities for all personnel are defined clearly and the arrangements for first aid and welfare are very thorough. Provision for child protection is now well established and all staff have a copy of the appropriate guidance documents. The behaviour policy is effective in promoting social development. The rules are simple and well understood and both parents and pupils know what standards are expected in the classroom and the playground. Regular attendance and punctuality are well promoted and in the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents confirmed that their children enjoyed coming to school.
43. There is a good range of assessment procedures for the monitoring of pupils' achievements and their progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Records begin with a baseline assessment, followed by regular assessment of mathematics and English and end of year tests. The assessment of attainment and progress in foundation subjects is becoming established and progressing well; pupils' personal and social development is also assessed against defined criteria; every child has a file containing personal information and copies of previous annual reports; attendance is monitored weekly. All of this information is analysed and used to plan class groupings, to identify the next steps in learning, to keep parents informed, to target extra help for those needing it. Records show clearly where pupils are having difficulty, either academically, socially or in their attendance, allowing the school to respond quickly.
44. Pupils with special educational needs have differentiated work linking to their individual education plans. Good records are built up so that detail of their progress is available for review meetings and further target setting.

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

45. Parents and carers hold generally positive views about what the school achieves for their children and its role in the community. Through the questionnaires and at the parents' meeting they have confirmed their satisfaction with standards and progress achieved. Most parents feel that teachers work hard and can be approached with confidence if there are problems. They feel the school promotes the right values and encourages their children to work hard. Some dissatisfaction was expressed about opportunities for younger pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities, although parents conceded that all pupils had good opportunities as they progressed through the school. There were conflicting views about homework. Some parents feel quite strongly that pupils at primary school should not be expected to do homework regularly as it sometimes interferes with out of school interests and activities. Others feel that pupils do not get enough homework especially to establish homework routines as they approach secondary education.
46. A significant proportion of parents feels they are not well informed about how children are getting on. Most information about the work of the school is conveyed to parents in newsletters. The pupils' annual reports are of a good standard and describe what pupils can do successfully, their strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. There are twice-yearly parent consultation evenings and those parents of children with special educational needs are well informed about progress and contribute to periodic reviews. Teachers make themselves available for informal contact at the start and end of the day and parents say they feel able to approach the school with problems. However, there are a number of areas where the school could improve the range of information provided. The school prospectus provides little information about the subjects of curriculum and extra-curricular activities. No information is provided to explain the forthcoming term's work in each class. There are no homework diaries containing information about the homework set and when it should be completed. The timing of parent consultations should be reviewed.
47. The last report expressed a concern that parents had not been formally consulted regarding their views on sex education. This remains the case. The content of the annual report of the governing body to parents has been improved, but is still missing two required elements.
48. Parents make a valuable contribution to their children's education. A good number of parents work alongside teachers in the classroom, helping with a variety of activities and there is never a shortage of volunteers to help with visits and transport to sporting fixtures. All parents are

encouraged to work with their children at home and most do so. There is a very active parent teacher association (PTA) and the funds raised go directly into resources for use in the classroom. This is most valuable, but equally as important, the PTA also organise many social activities, bringing together the staff, pupils and parents as a community.

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

49. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The stability of leadership provided by the headteacher contributes to the success of the school. In the previous inspection report, his expertise and commitment to develop the school were acknowledged. The headteacher continues to ensure clear educational direction for the school. A newly appointed deputy-head teacher, the sixth to serve under the present headteacher, is providing good support in the school's efforts to maintain high standards. Both are fully involved in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses and in planning for the future. Targets in national tests for example have been revised in view of the number of pupils with special education needs in the current Year 6 class. Detailed action plans are in place, for example to review subject co-ordination, raise standards and resource levels in information technology, and update subject policies. It is too early to assess the impact of the current year's development plans on pupils' achievements.
50. The delegation and contribution of staff with management responsibilities are satisfactory overall. However, the role of the senior management team, which consists of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is under-developed at present. Other key staff are involved by invitation to address specific issues but a programme of regular meetings is not in place and there is no representation from Key Stage 1. The responsibility for monitoring and evaluating teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is delegated to subject co-ordinators and is carried out effectively. Monitoring has identified areas for improvement and many of these have been acted upon. This contributes to the quality of education provided especially in English and mathematics. Other subject co-ordinators, however, only have the opportunity to monitor lesson planning and their contributions to the quality of teaching and learning are therefore limited.
51. The governors are interested in the work of the school and are generally supportive of it. The governing body meets its statutory obligations, with the exception of providing information on the professional development of teachers and a financial statement in their annual report. Through regular visits school to work with pupils in class, most governors are increasingly aware of the work of the school. The governors responsible for literacy and numeracy regularly visited classrooms to oversee the successful implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. The monitoring of teaching, by the headteacher is mainly undertaken on an informal basis rather than following any formal procedure.
52. The school has clear aims as expressed in the prospectus and these are reviewed annually by governors. They are strongly focused on what should be done to raise standards and improve the quality of education for all. Boys and girls have equal opportunities to take part in all areas of school life and this ensures that all pupils try to achieve their best and constantly strive to do better.
53. The school has established a firm commitment to improvement and this is clearly defined in the school development planning. The link between the budget and priorities for development is good. Specific grants are being used for their designated purposes, for example additional literacy support in Year 3. Additional funds are appropriately allocated to increase provision for pupils with special educational needs. Through the diligent work of the school secretary and chair of the finance committee, the school applies the principles of best value in its use of finances. Every effort is made to ensure that goods and services are purchased at competitive rates. The budget is monitored and controlled effectively by the headteacher and the recently appointed school secretary is currently undertaking training to assist with the management of the school finances. Satisfactory use is made of new technology to administer the accounts and the school has in place a facility to send and receive electronic mail. All the recommendations of the last audit report have been put into place. An unacceptably large surplus in the school's budget has been built up, largely as a result of an increase in pupil numbers and currently stands at approximately 14 per cent of the total allocation. Originally it was identified as a reserve to lessen the impact of two large year groups leaving the school

and to maintain single age classes. However, major housing developments nearby will sustain pupil admissions at or above the present level for the foreseeable future. Governors are fully aware of the situation and improvements to the level of resources for information technology, increased secretarial support and a reduction in the headteacher's teaching commitment are planned to reduce it to more acceptable levels next year.

54. The school has a satisfactory number of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and they are deployed appropriately. All staff, except the newly qualified teacher, co-ordinate a subject area or other aspect of the curriculum such as special educational needs. Most are appropriately qualified in their subject area and are effective in identifying the action needed to promote developments in their subjects. Job descriptions are in place and these clearly outline specific roles and responsibilities. Taking into account the number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register, the number of learning support assistants is satisfactory. The special educational needs co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. Good support is given to all teachers, particularly when formulating individual educational plans for pupils. The quality of these is mainly good, but on occasions some targets for improvement lack precision, making it difficult to measure progress. An up to date register of all pupils with special educational needs is maintained, but at present no pupils of very high attainment are identified or included on the register. The governor responsible for special needs effectively helps to ensure the requirements of the code of practice are fully met.
55. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is satisfactory. Appraisal procedures for the headteacher are in place and procedures for staff appraisal are on a two-year cycle. Training needs are identified through this process. There are good systems in place to support newly qualified teachers at the school. These teachers clearly benefit from this process.
56. The accommodation for the number of pupils on roll is good. The building is well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Indoor facilities such as the large hall and corridor areas are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Classrooms in the main building are reasonably spacious and attractive displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment. However, the two temporary classrooms situated in the playground are cramped, particularly the one for Year 6 pupils. The pupils in these classrooms have restricted access to the school library and this adversely affects their opportunity to work independently. The school has spacious grounds that are more than adequate for teaching physical education and for pupils to have space at break times. However, the provision for outdoor play for children under five is unsatisfactory, as there is no freedom of access to a secure area. The school has successfully developed an environmental area with a pond and it is used well to promote pupils' learning. Older pupils, for example, were quick to identify the difference between frogs and toads.
57. Resources for most areas of the curriculum are satisfactory. In mathematics and physical education they are good. Although resources for information technology have improved with the purchase of some new computers, they are still unsatisfactory when compared to similar schools nationally. There are too few up to date multi-media computers to promote learning effectively in each class. Moreover, the range of programs available for teachers to use to support learning in all subjects is limited. Plans are in place to use some of the budget surplus to provide every class with at least one new computer by the end of this year and ensure teachers are trained to use them effectively. The school library is insufficiently used as a place for personal research and study, partly because it is inaccessible to older pupils in the temporary classrooms. The quality and range of fiction and non-fiction books is generally inadequate to cater for the wide range of pupils' interests and topics covered in the curriculum.

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

58. The governors, headteacher and staff should include the following key issues in the post-inspection action plan:-
- (1) ensure that the work particularly in science, religious education, history and geography builds carefully on earlier learning by:- (paragraphs 28,50,104,117,121,145)
    - implementing Curriculum 2000 and considering national guidelines;

- enabling subject co-ordinators and key staff to monitor subjects effectively.
- (2) ensure sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in science at both key stages and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. (paragraphs 20,22,94,95,100)
- (3) ensure that information technology is used to support the work in all subjects of the curriculum by: (paragraphs 23,28,127)
- increasing resources, including computers and subject-specific programs;
  - providing appropriate training for teachers in their use;
  - identifying in subject planning specific areas where information technology is to be used and which programs are relevant.

The improvement of the provision for information technology has been identified by the school as a priority in the school development plan.

The following less important weaknesses not included in issues for action should also be considered by the school.

- the quality of the act of worship ( paragraph 37)
- the range and quality of the books in the library (paragraphs 57,80)
- outdoor play resources for the under fives ( paragraphs 56,70)
- statutory information in the governors' annual report to parents (paragraph 47)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	31	45	20	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		188
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		27

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	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	16	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	10
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	26	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (85)	100 (85)	96 (95)
	National	82 (80)	85 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	25	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	100 (90)	100 (95)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	89 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	11	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	20	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (89)	90 (95)	100 (100)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	20	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (95)	95 (95)	100 (100)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.8
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998-9
	£
Total income	260498
Total expenditure	250614
Expenditure per pupil	1424
Balance brought forward from previous year	26810
Balance carried forward to next year	36694

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	188
Number of questionnaires returned	62

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	24	66	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	69	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	8	53	29	6	3
The teaching is good.	56	37	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	11	53	32	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	27	10	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	39	2	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	18	61	13	2	6
The school is well led and managed.	44	48	3	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	63	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	6	53	26	2	13

## **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**

59. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 17 pupils under five years of age. On entry to school, the children's attainment is broadly average for their age. The results of the base-line assessment, conducted for each child in the term in which they turn five, show there is a wide range of attainment but a fairly close match between their early understanding of literacy and mathematical ideas. Listening and speaking skills are good although a few children have immature speech. Before they are five, children make good progress and by five most have exceeded the Desirable Learning Outcomes in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Many have exceeded them in language and literacy and mathematics. By the end of their reception year most pupils are working towards the Level 1 requirement of the National Curriculum. The teacher's detailed planning for each area of learning and her knowledge of individual aptitudes, attainments and needs ensures that the curriculum for the under fives is very good.
60. The school has maintained the high standards reported in the previous inspection report.

#### Personal and social development

61. By the age of five, most children show attainment that exceeds that expected for their age. Many are very confident and settle quickly into school life. Provision and teaching are very good. The teacher and the experienced and knowledgeable classroom assistant work together to develop the children's independence and their adherence to the agreed routines and practices. Time is given to ensuring that the children know the routines, such as tidying up when work is finished; who are the helpers for switching off the lights; knowing where things are kept. This is effective in developing high levels of self-discipline and a clear understanding of right and wrong in the classroom setting. The children are expected to take care of their own belongings and personal needs, including changing for physical activities.
62. Children concentrate well, often for long periods. Three children, for example, were absorbed in observing frog spawn and water creatures with hand lenses and comparing them with illustrations in a book for over fifteen minutes. Others shared tasks and helped each other organise what they needed for play with the floor-map and vehicles. A large number of children show a high level of ability to play amicably and productively with others. They show perseverance in trying things again if they do not work out properly the first time. They are good at tidying away after themselves and seldom need to be reminded. All the children enjoy new things and want to have their turn. Many expressed delight in following the route of Rosie the hen, set up for them in the classroom, climbing over the "bridge", crawling under the "bee-hives" and going around the "pond" etc. whilst they learnt about the language of position. There is clear sense of enjoyment in many of the activities the children undertake.

#### Language and literacy

63. By five, attainment is above average. Many children are articulate, confident speakers who use and understand a wide vocabulary. A very small number have poorly developed skills in communicating with others. All children are encouraged to talk in whole class and group activities by the staff's skilful use of questions. They are encouraged to evaluate the model vehicles they have made, for example and to suggest improvements. The teacher's use of technical vocabulary is effective in extending the children's use of language. There are appropriate opportunities for children to talk together as they work, and for more spontaneous conversation in structured play situations. Many children start school with an awareness of stories and books. They make very good progress overall. At five, many are reading simple stories. The children know most letters of the alphabet and use letter-sound knowledge when looking at new words. They are secure in forming letters correctly and write their names unaided. They use writing in their play in the "take-away café" and make lists. They are beginning to use words seen in displayed work and in their word-books to record their news. An attractive book corner with story sacks encourages a love of books. Print is very evident in the classroom, to label equipment, as captions on displays, as instructions and rules.

64. The quality of teaching is very good. In the literacy hour, effective use is made of big books to talk about the pictures and text and to encourage pupils to look at words, speech bubbles and sentences. Most of the children are quick learners and remember well stories heard. In retelling the story of a visit to the pet shop, a group confidently referred to details in the illustrations as well as using remembered phrases. They are beginning to use letter sounds to help them as they form letters. The teacher is skilful in questioning children and in giving them encouraging pointers as they work. She has high expectation that they will make progress and is using her knowledge from her assessments of what each can do to provide work at an appropriate level.

#### Mathematics

65. On starting school, most children have a sense of number expected for their age. They make good progress and by the age of five, have exceeded the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They understand the language of comparison, for example taller and shorter. They recognise two-dimensional shapes. They count accurately to 10, recognise numbers and match correctly a set of objects to the appropriate number. They order numbers correctly on the "washing line" and on the number grid. Higher attaining pupils are provided with more challenging tasks and work confidently with bigger numbers.
66. Teaching is very good and opportunities are taken to develop pupils' mathematical awareness in other activities, for example in songs and action rhymes. Opportunities are made for children to play with dice, dominoes and number jigsaws to consolidate their growing awareness of number patterns and symbols. As a result when the children undertake problem-solving activities as an introduction to addition, they recognise small groups of numbers without the need to count. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs receive good support that ensures that basic skills are secure. Group activities are carefully planned with an appropriate balance of practical activities and work with pencil and paper.

#### Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Some pupils have a good level of general knowledge for their age and bring a lot of experience to activities in the classroom. Other children's experiences are more limited, but they are all eager to learn. By the age of five, most have exceeded the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Provision and teaching are very good. Very good opportunities are made for children to investigate the world around them. The teacher uses questions very effectively to extend the children's thinking and learning.
68. The children talk willingly about their homes and families and have been exploring every-day artefacts of life in earlier times. They are fascinated by the contents of "granny's cupboard". The children have made bread and learned about the harvest celebrations in the Christian and Jewish calendar. They have followed the routes taken by favourite story-book characters and drawn their own simple routes, talking about the landmarks they pass. They experiment with sand, water and play-dough.
69. They are enthusiastic investigators. They observe the contents of the classroom aquarium closely with hand lenses that enable them to see how water snails move. There are opportunities for them to experiment with gears and they are keen to show how they can engage more gears and change the direction of movement by adjusting the rubber bands. They test which object will roll and which will not. They have experimented with different sandwich fillings and decided which they like best. They use the computer to support learning particularly in literacy and mathematical activities.

### Physical development

70. The quality of teaching and provision are very good. Children have lessons in the hall as well as joining the rest of the school for outdoor playtimes. The development observed in the planned physical education sessions indicates that at five, most children have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes and many have exceeded them. They move confidently, use space well and handle small equipment with growing dexterity and control. All the children in the lesson observed succeeded in bouncing and catching a ball. They exercise vigorously and are aware of their increased heart rate and breathing and that they get hot and sweaty! They respond quickly to their teacher's instructions and know that this is necessary to exercise safely. They co-operate very well in pairs to practise skills with quoits and balls. The children have some access to outdoor play when the weather is suitable but there are no wheeled toys, large play equipment or markings to enhance their experiences and to provide opportunities for co-operative and imaginative play.
71. The teacher develops children's manipulative skills well. Most use scissors, pencils, crayons, and glue spreaders skilfully. They use a range of construction equipment and small toys. In other areas of the curriculum the opportunities planned for them, for example sandwich making and building model vehicles with wheels and axles, encourage and develop manual dexterity. Most children use the computer mouse confidently to move the cursor, click on icons and drag objects to assemble pictures.

### Creative development

72. By five, attainment is good. The quality of provision and teaching in this area of learning are very good. Great care is taken to introduce children to a range of techniques and provide them with plenty of hands-on practice to gain confidence in the skills. The children have undertaken activities involving paint, pastel, collage and model making. They mix colours, experiment with rubbing different surfaces and mix wood shavings, sand and rice with paint to develop different textures. They use sweets to produce patterns to decorate Hansel and Gretel's house.
73. Children enjoy music. They sing a range of songs and use tuned and untuned percussion instruments to practise tunes and rhythm patterns. They respond very well to the dance sessions in the hall. They react to changes in tempo and demonstrate a range of movements. They demonstrate confidently when chosen to do so. Co-operative work in pairs is particularly well developed. The children listen to the music and watch each other's movements carefully. Many are able to move in harmony with each other, synchronising their movements closely.

## **ENGLISH**

74. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999 showed that the performance of pupils was:-
- well above the national average;
  - broadly in line with pupils from similar backgrounds.
75. The school's results show a slight improvement over the last three years. The findings of the inspection, based on the evidence of the pupils' completed work and the lessons observed indicate that pupils' attainments are above average and the school is likely to achieve its targets in the current year. These are slightly lower than last year (seven per cent lower, representing two pupils) and appropriately reflect the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 class. Most of these pupils have entered the school at a relatively late stage and a few only recently. Many of them are boys. This is reflected in the results of national tests that indicate that girls' achievements are higher than boys' by a bigger margin than that found nationally although both groups exceed the average.
76. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 1999 showed that in reading the performance of pupils was:-
- well above the national average;
  - well above the average for pupils from similar backgrounds.
77. In writing the performance of seven year olds in 1999 was:-
- above the national average;

- broadly in line with pupils from similar backgrounds.
78. The school's results show a slight improvement over three years in both reading and writing. Inspection findings, based on pupils' completed work, lesson observations and listening to pupils read, reflect test results.
  79. There are high standards of speaking and listening at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils give articulate answers and use adventurous vocabulary. They substantiate their opinions by giving reasons. They take account of others' views. Pupils' command of spoken English makes a valuable contribution to the quality of discussion in other subjects, for example history. Opportunities for pupils to be involved in drama are influential in building their confidence in speaking to an audience. By the end of Key stage 1 pupils ask and answer questions confidently. They explain their thinking well, telling the class how they arrived at an answer. They speak clearly, if sometimes quietly, to an audience.
  80. Standards of reading are high throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read both fiction and non-fiction books accurately and fluently for pleasure and for information. They know how to use the library to find books on different topics and use a range of books, choosing the most useful text for their purposes. They use flagging systems, for example bold type, to help them find sections in the text quickly. The range and quality of books in the library are, however, poor and provide pupils with little encouragement to use them to advantage. Pupils read fiction with understanding and refer to the text when explaining their views about the plot and about different characters. The range and quality of fiction in classrooms are adequate but the collection in the library is small. This does little to promote pupils' enjoyment of reading. They do use the mobile library when it visits the school. Pupils at the end of Key stage 1 read independently, using a range of strategies to help them with unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils read challenging texts. Most pupils correct themselves when errors obscure the meaning, indicating that they are listening thoughtfully. They express preferences. Pupils' reading diaries indicate that there is good support from home that contributes to good progress. When pupils refer to non-fiction books they use the index and contents page readily to find information quickly. They know how to use alphabetical order and understand this is how the index is arranged and why this is so.
  81. Standards of writing are above average, but not as high as reading standards. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use their writing skills for a range of purposes, including expressive writing, formal letters, reports and evaluations. Most pupils use accurate spelling and punctuation and they structure their writing appropriately. Evidence from pupils' completed work indicates that opportunities for expressive writing, particularly writing at length, are not sufficiently extensive to promote good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils write a page of interesting news. They have learnt to join their writing and handwriting books indicate that they are developing a flowing style. They use capital letters and full stops appropriately and spell common words accurately. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop interesting vocabulary but they usually join sentences with: and, but or then. Some opportunities are made for pupils to write for different purposes, for example lists and letters but the range is narrow. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use information technology. Over the course of time, however, opportunities are too few to make a substantial contribution to pupils' writing, especially drafting skills.
  82. The high standards in English reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained in both key stages.
  83. The teaching is good at both key stages and sometimes very good. Teachers' planning is good, indicating clearly what pupils are to learn in the lesson. Teachers share their objectives with pupils with the result that pupils concentrate on those aspects as they work and make good progress. Individual target setting is used to good effect in Year 4. For example these pupils know that they are "knocking on the door of Level 4" and each of them knows what needs to be done to open the door! Basic skills of reading, writing and spelling are taught well throughout the school. Pupils in the reception class make a very good start and from then on skills build steadily within lessons, from lesson to lesson and from class to class. This enables pupils to tackle increasingly challenging work as they get older and results in high standards. Pupils in Year 5, for example, use the adventurous vocabulary learned in their discussion about legends, in the following day's lesson. There is insufficient emphasis on expression, however, when pupils read independently in both key stages. When suggestions are made, for

example how to use different voices for different characters when reading speech, or how to respond to an exclamation mark, there is an immediate improvement but these are too infrequent. The pupils are not always encouraged to use dictionaries to check spelling and opportunities to use the thesaurus when trying out alternative vocabulary are missed. Many dictionaries are very old and in a poor condition. They have none of the helpful colour printing and flagging systems which pupils would find useful. The quality of marking varies from class to class and does not always provide pupils with information about how they could improve. The exception to this is in Year 6 where the teachers' comments are constructive and helpful.

84. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils usually fulfil these expectations. Little time is lost in managing pupils or organising tasks. This enables teachers to provide good support for groups and to make useful teaching points as pupils work. As a result pupils work productively and lessons proceed at a good pace. Most pupils in both key stages, but particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, have positive attitudes to their learning, try hard to do their best and take a pride in their work.
85. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and of the National Literacy Strategy. They use the structure of the literacy hour to good effect. They use texts and teaching methods in the whole-class part of the lesson that interest the pupils and challenge them, building on their knowledge and deepening their understanding. This ensures that learning is effective. Pupils in both key stages have a good understanding of different types of writing and discuss, for example, what makes information easy to access and how legends differ from myths. Good opportunities are provided for independent work so that pupils can consolidate and extend new learning. Teachers regularly provide small amounts of homework, including reading and spelling in Key Stage 1 and, in addition, writing and research tasks in Key stage 2. Most parents support homework well and when this occurs it boosts pupils' progress.
86. Teachers use the information they have gained from assessing pupils to match the work closely to the needs of different groups. This is usually successful in providing appropriate levels of challenge for all and ensuring that pupils are well motivated and concentrate until called together for the plenary session at the end of the lesson. There are a few occasions, however, when the work expected of higher attaining pupils is insufficiently demanding and they could achieve more. At these times they show less interest in the tasks, are slow to settle and work with little sense of urgency. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and appropriate tasks that provide time to consolidate each step. Teachers are aware of the targets in individual education plans and ensure that pupils make good progress towards them. Learning support assistants have been involved in specific training, work closely with the co-ordinator and provide valuable additional support in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3.
87. The implementation of the literacy hour has been monitored carefully by the co-ordinator and many useful areas for improvement have been identified as a result. For example, extra books have been purchased for Year 1 to provide a wider range of difficulty. Assessment information is analysed to provide helpful information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This is used to set targets for groups, to identify pupils who need extra help and to report in more detail to parents. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and extra help is provided by class teachers and learning support assistants to those pupils who need it.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999 showed that the performance of pupils was:-
  - well above the national average;
  - broadly in line with pupils from similar backgrounds.
89. The school's results show a slight improvement over the last three years. The findings of the inspection, based on the evidence of the pupils' completed work and the lessons observed indicate that pupils' attainments are above average and the school is likely to achieve its targets for the current year. These are slightly lower than last year (five per cent lower) and appropriately reflect the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 class. Most of these pupils have entered the school at a relatively late stage and some recently. The results in mathematics for 1999 and the previous three years at Key Stage 2

- show that the school has consistently maintained standards at well above the national average.
90. The results of National Curriculum Tests for seven year olds in 1999 showed that pupils' performance was:-
    - in line with the national average;
    - below the average for pupils from similar backgrounds.
  91. These judgements take account of the smaller proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 than occurs nationally. Almost all lower-attaining pupils achieved the national target of Level 2. The trend over the last the four years shows a light decline. The findings of the inspection confirm that standards are broadly in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. Most pupils achieve appropriate standards. The proportion of pupils working at Level 3 remains low and a few of these pupils could do better. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
  92. Pupils of all ages show confidence with numbers. They regularly practice solving number problems mentally. Teachers contribute greatly to pupils' understanding by asking them how they arrived at an answer and discussing ways of working problems out. They encourage pupils to try different methods themselves. This particularly applies to the mental arithmetic sessions introduced as part of the National Numeracy Strategy. Year 6 pupils can recite tables, double numbers and work out all the factors for a given number. Most pupils confidently use four and five figure numbers and know the value of each digit. They are becoming increasingly confident in using mathematical language associated with numbers. Some pupils of higher attainment can calculate fractional parts of quantities and use decimals or negative numbers when solving problems. Pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to say how they arrived at an answer when adding or subtracting. Most do this competently. Almost all pupils add 10 to a 2-digit number. Some opportunities are made for pupils to use their numeracy skills in subjects beyond mathematics. For example, pupils record temperatures using positive or negative numbers in geography and analyse data about weather conditions at different locations around the world. However, teachers rarely include opportunities to use class computers in their lesson planning. As a result, information technology is not used well to promote or consolidate the full range of pupils' skills in mathematics and this limits their progress. Computers are rarely used for data handling, for example. This restricts the consolidation of computing skills and means that pupils sometimes waste time colouring graphs by hand.
  93. Achievement at Key Stage 2 is good and most pupils' make good progress. The neatest work and best rate of progress evident in pupils completed work occurs in Year 4. The quality of teaching observed contributes strongly to this. The work builds well on the good habits established in Year 3 when pupils routinely consider alternative strategies for calculation and decide which is best. Pupils in Year 5 have a good understanding of the value of each figure in a large number and can divide by 2, 5 or 10 quickly. Throughout the key stage, pupils become more confident in handling numbers. By the time they are in Year 6, almost all pupils carry out mental calculations in the four processes quickly and accurately, explaining their methods confidently. Most find the perimeter and area of regular shapes such as a triangle accurately. Higher attaining pupils are given the opportunity to work independently and their tasks are challenging.
  94. Most pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. This is especially true of average and lower-attaining pupils. There is little evidence in completed work of higher attaining pupils undertaking challenging tasks associated with Level 3 of the National Curriculum in any area of mathematics. Teachers' assessments confirm this. A small group of higher attaining pupils could make more progress. Most pupils in reception count and order numbers to 10 and higher attaining pupils are confident with bigger numbers. They recognise small groups of objects without counting and are beginning to recognise number bonds. Pupils in Year 1 know which method to use to solve number problems. They use a calculator with confidence to check their answers to addition and subtraction sums. Year 2 pupils apply their numeracy skills to investigative tasks in the classroom, for example in finding out who has the longest socks. By the end of the key stage, the vast majority of the pupils have a thorough understanding of most elements of the programme of study, but relatively few have embarked on Key Stage 2 work.
  95. The quality of teaching in the last inspection was always satisfactory and frequently good or very good. The quality has improved as most of lessons observed in this inspection were good or very good. In the best lessons pupils are constantly challenged and respond exceptionally well to the enthusiastic teaching style. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment is closely

linked to the quality of teaching that takes place. Teachers plan their lessons well, ensuring that work is generally well matched to pupils' capabilities. At the end of Key stage 1 the work is not always sufficiently challenging for higher-attaining pupils. As a result their progress is not as good as it might be. In both key stages, teachers take account of their assessments when planning lessons. As a result, pupils build effectively on previous learning. Teachers generally have a secure knowledge of the subject. Pupils of all ages are given the opportunity to work independently, consolidating mathematical skills during practical activities. In Year 6, for example, pupils worked out the discounts available on a range of electrical goods. Overall, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and their management of pupils are good. The quality of marking varies from class to class but overall it is good. On occasions pupils are given little indication of how to further improve their work. Teachers are ably assisted by staff who take responsibility for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for them is generally good. The contribution of homework, which is set regularly, has a satisfactory impact on standards. Pupils are mainly asked to complete class work or to learn tables. This helps them to take part confidently in the mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of most numeracy lessons and respond quickly to teachers' questions.

96. The quality of learning in mathematics is good throughout the school. Most pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to be the first to answer questions. Pupils of all abilities are well motivated and concentrate on the interesting work provided for them. All work at a good pace and most complete the tasks set for them during lessons. This positive attitude and willingness to work hard was also reported in the previous inspection report. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress as a result. Most achieve the levels expected of them by the time they are ready to leave the school. They are usually given appropriate work to do and this often relates to the targets set for them in their individual education plans.
97. Management and co-ordination are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has successfully introduced the numeracy strategy and conducted training for staff. There are clear procedures for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and governors have also been involved in the process.

## SCIENCE

98. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 1999 indicate that the performance of the pupils was:-
- above the national average;
  - below the average when compared with other similar schools.
99. Although all the pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or above, the number of pupils who achieved Level 5 was below the national average. Consequently, overall attainment fell below that of schools with pupils of a similar background. The standards achieved by lower attaining pupils were better than the national picture.
100. Teacher assessments for seven year olds in 1999 indicate a similar pattern. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 2, 100 per cent, was very high compared with the national average. No pupils attained the higher Level 3, however and this compares unfavourably with other schools nationally. The high proportion of pupils attaining the expected level at both key stages has been maintained over the last three years. The number of pupils attaining higher levels at Key Stage 2 has fallen. The scrutiny of work during the inspection supports these findings. Higher attaining pupils are not being sufficiently challenged at the end of either key stage and consequently are working towards the higher levels, but not actually achieving them. The achievements of lower attaining pupils are good.
101. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 can name all the main body parts. They know about the five senses and can identify the similarities and differences between themselves and a friend. They are aware of the dangers of electricity and can make a simple circuit that will light up a bulb. The pupils have investigated changes in materials and can identify whether it is a push or a pull force that is being used to make something work. Pupils in Year 1 are achieving a very similar standard already and are making good progress. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 understand circulation and have investigated the effect of exercise on heart rate. They have

set out the investigation using conventional layout, but they have not checked the validity of their results and tend to present findings on charts rather than graphs. They are working towards an understanding of balanced and unbalanced forces, but some of their work on forces is at a very basic level.

102. Overall, the majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress at both key stages. However their progress is uneven. Teachers are not always fully aware of what has gone before and may repeat work at the same or a lower level. Consequently progress in some classes is better than in others. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well for their ability and make good progress. Higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged and do not always make as much progress as they could. Where teachers do provide them with more challenging or extension activities, they respond well and make appropriate progress.
103. Pupils' attitudes towards science are positive. Their behaviour is generally good. Pupils particularly enjoy practical investigations. Throughout the school, they are keen to ask and answer questions. On occasions, they show real curiosity and the desire to pursue a line of enquiry until they find the answer. This was evident when pupils in Year 5 began to investigate whether forces were equal. Their enthusiasm meant they made real gains in knowledge and understanding in a short time. Pupils generally take care with the presentation of their work. They listen well to the teacher and each other. They are quick to settle to written work and are willing to help each other and share ideas.
104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. It is occasionally good or very good. Teachers' planning for individual lessons is detailed and they are well prepared. However they lack the detailed guidance of a scheme of work which clearly indicates how the work set should be different for pupils of different ages. As a result, although they all have high expectations in terms of behaviour, not all expect high enough standards academically. Teachers always consider the needs of pupils with special educational needs but provision for the highest attainers is not demanding enough. All teachers manage pupils well. They plan interesting activities that are often appropriately linked to ongoing work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 make bread to investigate how it changes on heating. At the same time they were finding out about how life was different in the early 1900's. As part of their history topic, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made siege weapons. This developed their design and technology skills and relied upon their understanding of forces. Work is frequently marked and often contains evaluative comments that show pupils how they can improve. Teachers generally use questioning well, to check what pupils have understood and to prompt them to think and justify their responses. Opportunities for the oldest pupils to carry out individual research are limited and, throughout the school, there are few opportunities to use information technology to support learning. Teachers make good use of the resources available and, whenever possible, make visits to places of scientific interest. The co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the subject and is currently identifying the changes needed to teach Curriculum 2000. He is aware of the need to monitor more rigorously the teaching and learning in order to ensure that progress becomes more even across the school.

## **ART**

105. Since the time of the previous inspection, art continues to be an important part of the school curriculum. It is given a high priority and consequently pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are higher than those achieved by pupils of the same age nationally. Good quality displays of work throughout the school contribute to the creation of a stimulating and attractive working environment. The school teaches all the requirements of the National Curriculum programme of study for art. Pupils acquire a broad range of skills and are given the opportunity to work with a wide range of materials. They have the chance to look at the work of a large number of very different artists and learn how their styles vary. They find out about the lives of artists such as Picasso. The youngest pupils have studied the work of Giuseppe Arcimboldo and have clearly enjoyed creating their own paintings of faces using fruits and vegetables. Their finished results, which are of a good standard, show care and imagination. Pupils in Key stage 2 have studied the work of Monet and Matisse. Whole classes have produced large-scale paintings, for example in response to Monet's Poppy Field. These are of a very good standard and show that pupils have understood and are able to use the particular techniques favoured by the artist. As pupils move through the school, they develop their close observational skills, as indicated by the detailed pencil drawings of William Shakespeare produced by pupils in Year 6. Pupils become competent in the use of paint, pastels, charcoal, pencils, modroc, clay, fabrics, threads and different types of paper. The pupils' ability to mix colours becomes more skilled as they get older and some good examples of pupils investigating the use of tints and shades is on display. They learn that colour can be used to convey mood and feelings and use this knowledge to good effect.
106. Pupils display very good attitudes towards the subject. They behave very well in lessons. They listen carefully, follow instructions and closely observe teachers' demonstrations of skills. This enables them to acquire new knowledge and skills at a good rate. The pupils are generally keen to do well. The vast majority take real care with their work and try hard to present it well. They look after the resources well from a very early age and show good levels of responsibility when collecting and tidying away materials. Given the opportunity, they are happy to use their imagination. They work well independently and in both small and large groups. Pupils in Year 1 showed remarkable sensitivity when asked to comment on each other's work. The comments many of them made were particularly perceptive.
107. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers all have a secure understanding of the subject. They have clearly benefited from a number of training sessions in the subject. They plan an interesting range of activities for the pupils, which successfully stimulates their interest and enthusiasm. Many activities are closely and sensibly linked to ongoing work in other subjects. For example, Year 1 pupils have produced some imaginative paintings of old and new bears related to their work in history. They have also produced detailed drawings in response to music they have listened to and a story they have heard. In response to work in religious education, pupils have studied Rangoli and Mendhi patterns. Teachers have made good use of local artists to teach pupils specialist skills and to stimulate their interest. Opportunities have also been provided for pupils to take part in community art activities. These have recently involved woodcarving and mosaics. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly. They are clear about their learning objectives and sensibly use these to assess pupils' achievement in the subject. Teachers are well organised and make good use of the resources that are available. They take care to value the work of all pupils in discussion and through display.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

108. At both key stages, pupils make good progress in lessons. They achieve standards that are similar to those of pupils of the same age nationally. They have the chance to work with the full range of materials specified in the National Curriculum, for example, food, fabric and threads of different types, wood, card, clay and junk materials. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 develop skills in control technology and learn how to write simple computer programs to operate vehicles and sets of traffic lights they have made. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have produced labelled drawings of the houses they have made after listening to the story of Hansel and Gretel. They have chosen their sweets for decoration carefully to produce the desired effect. Their final models are of a good standard. The pupils have worked well using card and paper,

carefully cutting, folding and rolling them to make models of their favourite meals. When making vehicles out of junk materials, they proved that they can evaluate their work realistically when discussing it with the class teacher.

109. Pupils continue to develop their practical skills as they move through Key stage 2. They put more thought into the choice of materials they will use, choosing them more carefully so they are fit for the purpose. They acquire a greater range of skills and techniques and use them with greater precision. The pupils develop their drawing skills and produce carefully annotated and measured drawings by the end of the key stage. Before selecting the best design to make, they produce a range of alternatives. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed and made some working models of weapons which could propel a ball at least three metres. This work is linked to their history topic and they have done some useful research before producing their final designs. Their evaluations contain some perceptive comments.
110. The school has maintained the standards achieved during the last inspection report, although the number of design and technology activities has been reduced since the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours. Teachers still base their planning on the scheme of work that was in use last time. This ensures pupils acquire skills and knowledge systematically as they move through the school. The co-ordinator has already prepared a new scheme ready for the introduction of Curriculum 2000. The school is aware that the current policy for the teaching of design and technology is due for review.
111. Pupils at both key stages enjoy this subject. They particularly enjoy making things. There is clear evidence of the good use of imagination when designing some of the artefacts. Pupils respond well to a challenge and are keen to make the best models. Pupils are capable of working independently and in small groups. They are quick to help each other, either by making useful suggestions, providing encouragement when things go wrong or by providing an extra pair of hands. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate awareness of safety issues and they tidy away well at the end of lessons. When talking to pupils, it is clear that they are aware of what others in the class have made, particularly if they are impressed by it. In the lessons observed, pupils behaved well, listened carefully and followed the instructions.
112. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. This enables them to plan an interesting range of activities that progressively develop the pupils' designing and making skills. Wherever possible, appropriate links are made to work in other subjects and this makes the tasks more relevant and realistic. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 have written a story suitable for reception children and are now producing a book with a range of mechanisms which will create moving pages and therefore be more interesting to young children. Teachers plan a range of focussed practical tasks that develop particular practical skills. These then lead to a designing and making activity, where pupils use their previously acquired skills and knowledge to produce something suitable for a specified purpose. Teachers provide competent demonstrations and explanations of new skills. Good use is made of the resources available. Pupils' work is attractively displayed and contributes to a stimulating environment. Teachers keep records of pupils' achievement in the subject. This enables them to write useful comments on their school reports. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their work from an early age. They recognise that this is an aspect that could be further developed at the end of Key Stage 2.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. At the time of the previous inspection standards were reported to be above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 2. The recent relaxing of National Curriculum requirements for some subjects to allow for the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy hours has meant that there has been less emphasis on the teaching of geography over the past two years and this has limited pupils' achievements. It was only possible to see two lessons at each

key stage but a detailed scrutiny of pupils' books and work on display was undertaken. On the basis of this evidence standards overall are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of both key stages.

114. Throughout the school, pupils acquire a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of a range of places. They can compare their own environment with contrasting localities in the United Kingdom and the wider world. For example, in their study of Greece, Year 6 pupils compare the temperature and rainfall of that area and five other major cities from Murmansk to Sydney. Year 1 pupils make comparisons about life on an imaginary island called Struay and life in Bassingham. Pupils in Year 3 study the geography of Kenya. Holiday trips by pupils also provide much valuable information to incorporate into lessons. Year 4 pupils, for example, are building a sound understanding of the continents and oceans as they track a locally-owned private yacht on its round the world journey. Work of this nature helps pupils to make satisfactory progress in understanding maps and plans in a variety of scales. In Year 2, pupils successfully draw plans of objects in their classroom or the route a train takes to the seaside, adding features such as docks or bridges which it passes on the way. Older pupils use maps and an atlas confidently to locate places they are studying. However, little use is currently made of CD ROM programs or the class computer to assist them in their work.
115. Overall, pupils have positive attitudes to learning geography. Most work with sustained interest and concentrate well on the tasks set for them. This ensures that all, including those with special educational needs, achieve appropriate standards.
116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to give pupils accurate information and clear instructions. The work sheets that they prepare are of a good quality, but there was little evidence of separate work being provided for pupils of higher or lower attainment. All were usually set the same tasks to complete. As a result, some pupils find the work easy, whilst others need help to complete it. In Year 2 for example, all had to write a list of features before drawing the same route. This took pupils of lower ability too long and many did not get the chance to complete their route map before the lessons ended. In Year 6, all were given the same weather data, taken from the Internet, to compare. Some pupils who were unsure about percentages or negative numbers needed much support to finish their work. This slows the rate of progress for some pupils. Resources, other than computers, are usually well prepared for lessons and used effectively to help pupils learn. However, opportunities to use of class computers and suitable programs are not identified in teachers' planning. As a result opportunities are missed to extend pupils' learning. All teachers manage pupils well and conduct lessons at a good pace. This ensures most pupils maintain interest in the lesson and work hard.
117. As a result of the smaller amount of time allocated to geography since the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours, teachers have needed to select which parts of the scheme to cover. This has resulted in work that does not always build on earlier learning. During the inspection all classes in Key Stage 2 were following a topic about the weather at similar levels of difficulty. This provides insufficiently demanding work for older pupils and is adversely affecting standards in geography. Visits to places of interest such as Lincoln and an annual residential visit greatly enhance pupils' learning.

## **HISTORY**

118. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress and achieve standards which are higher than those achieved by pupils of the same age nationally. Pupils develop an awareness of the past and present by looking at old and new cars and teddy bears. They find out how farming equipment has changed over time and find out from their parents about the televisions they used and the programmes they watched as children. Pupils have done a lot of work on kitchens through the ages. They sequence Viking, Tudor, Victorian and present day kitchens and put them onto a time-line. They have had the chance to handle old kitchen equipment and can identify its modern day equivalent and compare them. They have learned about famous people in the past, such as Guy Fawkes, and can retell the stories orally and in writing. Their language skills develop as they talk and listen in discussions with their teachers and read and write descriptively.

119. Pupils at Key Stage 2 continue to develop their historical skills as they follow the National Curriculum study units. Their progress is sound and they extend the range of their historical knowledge. Pupils are currently undertaking a study of the history of the local area. They have carried out research using primary and secondary sources of evidence. They have found out about life in Medieval Lincoln and can compare it to our lives today. In Year 5, pupils demonstrate empathy in their descriptions of what it is like to be in the dungeon in Lincoln castle awaiting trial. Pupils have done some interesting work, but the depth of work at the end of the key stage is insufficient for them to maintain the level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Overall, they are achieving standards similar to those of pupils of the same age nationally.
120. Pupils respond well in history lessons at both key stages. They particularly enjoy working with first hand evidence, for example the extensive range of old kitchen equipment in the Key Stage 1 classrooms. Pupils in Year 4 responded with real interest when a local resident came in to answer their questions about how the village had changed during her lifetime. Pupils in Year 5 worked well together to research the treatment of the Jews and crime and punishment in the Middle Ages. They exchange ideas and information willingly and consequently, between them, build up a good bank of knowledge.
121. The quality of teaching is consistently good at Key Stage 1. It is generally satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and occasionally good or very good. All teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. They plan their work carefully and include an interesting range of activities. Whenever possible visits are made to places of historical interest, for example Eden Camp, or to historical events such as the Viking re-enactment day. These activities are very successful at bringing the subject to life for the pupils. The school has not yet identified how to slim down the curriculum and this means that individual teachers have to make their own decisions. The result is that the clear progression seen in the old schemes of work is no longer secure. Consequently there is not always a significant difference between the standards achieved by pupils of different ages, particularly at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, teachers have consistently high expectations and this leads them to plan challenging activities for the pupils. At Key Stage 2, expectations are variable and at the end of the key stage they are not always high enough, particularly of the higher attaining pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and this means that pupils are confident to make contributions during class discussions. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and make useful comments that prompt pupils to think further about what they have written. Teachers make good use of the resources available, although the contribution made by information technology is unsatisfactory.
122. The subject is effectively led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator, who is aware of the need to monitor the teaching and learning in the subject more rigorously. He is currently producing a new scheme of work in response to the National Curriculum 2000.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

123. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 2. This represents a fall in standards from the previous inspection when they were found to be well above average, with information technology being identified as a strength of the school. The school has not kept up with the many advances in information technology and the higher expectations of what pupils should achieve. The school has recently begun to install more modern computers but the number available for pupils to use is still below the provision in similar schools. Pupils' access to computers is restricted as a result and this is having an adverse effect on their progress in the subject.
124. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils achieve standards in line with the expectations for pupils of their age. In the reception class for example, pupils use an old BBC computer to help them to learn the letters of the alphabet. On a more modern computer, they sort fruit into categories and use tape recorders with confidence to listen to stories. Year 1 pupils create maps of imaginary

places in geography and write out recipes for a Jewish meal to celebrate the festival of the Passover. Year 2 pupils show a developing confidence in keyboard skills and most successfully load, save and print out their work.

125. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements are generally above those expected for pupils of this age. Most are able to load programs, save and retrieve work unaided. The pupils with most confidence are those who have computers at home. All pupils are confident when using the computer for word-processing. They can change print size and the font style. In Year 3, for example, pupils compose letters to friends and families and e.mail them to places all over the world. Higher attaining pupils edit and add illustrations to enhance the appearance of their work, but some require support and guidance to accomplish this. Pupils in Year 6 work in small groups, helping and supporting one another to locate information from a CD ROM. In geography, for example, they effectively use an index to find out details about life in Greece and print it without help. Pupils in Year 4 have had some experience in using spreadsheets to enter and store data about the weather. Most are able to produce graphs using the information they have found. Evidence was seen of pupils using computer equipment for controlling, monitoring and modelling. In Year 5, for example, a working model is linked permanently to an old computer so that pupils can practise their skills of control.
126. Pupils' achievement throughout Key Stage 2 is generally above expectations. Computers are used reasonably well to consolidate writing skills in most classes. The frequency of pupils using computers to assist and extend their learning in other subjects, particularly mathematics however, is low. Some good examples were observed during the inspection of work produced in history, art, geography, science and English. In one class, pupils used a fine art program effectively to design a cover for their activity book and the CD ROM was used well to research information about the weather in geography and electricity in science. However, in some classes, pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunity to use a computer. The incompatibility and age of computers in the school and shortage of subject-related programs restrict their usefulness.
127. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in information technology. No whole class lessons were observed during the inspection. In the few lessons where direct teaching of skills was observed, teachers' knowledge was satisfactory. Teachers are clear about their aims and most have adequate technical knowledge to give them confidence. For example, a teacher in Year 2 effectively taught pupils to use an art program so that they could produce pictures of their favourite foods and design a pizza. In Year 4 pupils were shown how to create texture patterns and Year 6 were reasonable confident using a CD ROM. However, the practice of setting up a rota for two pupils at a time to use one computer is an ineffective and time consuming way of teaching new skills. The effectiveness of teachers' planning for the use of information technology to support other subjects is limited because opportunities are not identified in curriculum planning. Provision is therefore haphazard. Teachers have limited knowledge of suitable subject-related programs and a lack of confidence in using them. This also affects provision adversely.
128. A systematic approach to assessing pupils' progress in their acquisition of skills is undertaken and the results used well to plan future learning. Pupils with special needs achieve satisfactory standards and their progress is also generally good as a result of the support they receive from teachers and other adult helpers.
129. When pupils have the opportunity to work on computers, they show interest and application. They help each other and persevere to achieve success. Their response to direct teaching is enthusiastic. Pupils in Year 4 for example, took great pride in their ability to print out information in graphical form showing the results of a class survey to find out whether traditional English pancakes were preferred to American pancakes. There is an active computer club which uses the local Heritage Room situated in the village, a short walk away from the school. Demand for membership is high and pupils look forward to using the modern computers and programs. They show a high level of skill as they use scanners to load photographs of their pets, keep in contact by e.mail with a large private yacht on its world cruise or explore Bassingham village web site on the Internet.
130. The adequacy of resources to meet the demands of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The previous inspection report referred to a realistic programme for updating and adding to resource levels. The school has recently acquired some new computers but generally the rate of

improvement has not been sufficient to keep pace with current requirements. There are still not enough computers for pupils to use and the range of subject-related programs is below acceptable levels. The fact that many pupils have computers at home is helping to maintain standards. The scheme of work is to be reviewed shortly to incorporate the latest guidelines from the government.

## **MUSIC**

131. It is not possible to make judgements about the overall quality of teaching, progress or pupils' attainments in music as only one lesson was observed in each key stage.
132. The school uses commercially produced taped lessons for each class. These are appropriately graded in difficulty for pupils of different ages. They include opportunities for performing with voice and instruments, composing, listening and appraising different types of music. Thus they cover all the required elements of the National Curriculum.
133. In the lessons seen teachers used the tapes well. They know the material and plan carefully how to extend them either at a convenient point during the tape or afterwards. They use the teachers' notes to ensure their knowledge and understanding of the elements required are sufficient to ensure the pupils make sound progress. As a result, pupils learn new skills and practice and refine existing skills. They enjoy their singing and sing with appropriate phrasing and attention to diction, pitch and dynamics. They co-operate well when required to do so, for example in group composition work. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 can follow a graphic score when they play instruments together. Older pupils follow conventional notation. Pupils in both key stages sing songs from a range of different times and traditions. Older pupils sing part songs and rounds and sustain a part with growing confidence. They also compose ostinato accompaniments to tunes they have learnt, building on the work that is done in Key Stage 1 with a drone accompaniment.
134. Pupils behave well in lessons, concentrate on their tasks and listen carefully to the tape and to the teacher. They enjoy their work.
135. There are opportunities outside lesson times for pupils to learn an instrument. Brass and woodwind tuition are given to small groups of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 and there are recorder groups for beginners and improvers at lunch-times. The school's drama and music productions provide further opportunities for pupils to broaden their musical experiences and to perform to larger audiences.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

136. Standards at the end of both key stages are above national expectations. This was also found to be the case in the previous inspection in 1996. The school is successfully maintaining its high standards. Pupils in Year 6 attain high standards in gymnastics. They practice, refine and repeat a series of actions on the floor and on apparatus, showing a good awareness of body tension and control. All work well with a partner to mirror one another's movements and demonstrate good balance. Most know the effects of exercise on their bodies and most sustain energetic activity well. They show confidence when demonstrating for the whole class and sensibly evaluate the performance of others. Pupils display similarly high standards in their games' skills. When playing basketball outdoors, for example, all show a good competitive spirit, attacking, dodging and defending competently. The school reports that every year, virtually all pupils achieve the expected standards in swimming at the end of the key stage.
137. Younger pupils show equal determination to do well in physical education lessons. In a Year 3 dance lesson for example, pupils respond appropriately to taped music and emphasise shapes and patterns, inspired by the music, with their bodies. The poor quality of sound from the small tape player used in the hall detracts from the overall performance. Pupils in Year 1 work hard to practice and refine their throwing and catching skills. They develop good hand and eye co-ordination and improve their accuracy in these skills. Children in the reception class are just as keen to take part in physical education sessions and establish good routines at this early age. All know how to set out equipment carefully and respond well to signals for attention. Pupils of all

ages realise the importance of warming up before strenuous activity and how to relax their bodies at the end of sessions.

138. Overall, attitudes to dance, gymnastics or games sessions are very good. Pupils change quickly and quietly and listen well to instructions. All sensibly obey rules to safeguard their own and others' safety. Behaviour is very good, which means that little time is lost during lessons waiting for pupils' attention. Pupils of all ages and abilities are motivated, hardworking and keen to be involved. There was no shortage of volunteers to demonstrate in the Year 6 gymnastics lesson and children in the reception class were eager to share their ideas about actions appropriate to the music. Even the youngest moved with confidence and enjoyment. Pupils with special educational needs and those of higher attainment compete equally in lessons. All show a good sense of responsibility and fair play. In warm up games outside on the field for example, there was no argument or dissent when Year 3 pupils were eliminated from a ball game. Older pupils in Year 6 take their turn on apparatus without queue jumping and Year 1 pupils readily appreciate, with spontaneous clapping, the performance of others.
139. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons well. Before and during lessons they give clear instructions to pupils which means that all know exactly what is expected of them. Tasks are sufficiently demanding and the pace keeps all pupils sufficiently challenged and interested. Demonstration is used effectively to illustrate skills and encourage pupils to improve their own performance. As a result, the quality of learning in all the lessons seen was good or very good.
140. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory, but the scheme provides insufficient guidance to help teachers to plan work which builds systematically on pupils' previous learning. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. All pupils have the opportunity to play football, netball, rugby and basketball on a regular basis. Girls and boys have the opportunity to join in with team games and frequent football, netball or cross-country events are arranged against other schools. This helps to give pupils a sense of fair play and sharpens up their spirit of competitiveness in sport.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

141. At the ends of both key stages, standards are in line with the expectations set out in the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The previous inspection report indicated that standards were good. The increased amount of time now given to English and mathematics has resulted in less time being spent on religious education.
142. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about festivals and celebrations from the Christian and Jewish traditions. Pupils' completed work indicates that they have a sound knowledge of the rituals associated with the Passover meal, of harvest celebrations from both traditions, of Christmas and the birth of Jesus. They know some of the stories from the New Testament, for example the Good Samaritan and make links with the personal responsibilities they discuss in personal and social education. Very young children begin this process by considering the message in the story of the Little Red Hen. The emphasis on special things within their own experience leads to the beginnings of understanding of sacred books and places.
143. By the time pupils are due to leave at the end of Year 6, most have a secure knowledge of the main elements of Christian belief and the main tenets of belief and the key figures of Judaism. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make appropriate links between religious practice and moral behaviour. They consider the need for rules in general and school rules in particular when they learn about

the ten commandments. They know about the signs and symbols in every-day life and those associated with the Christian and Jewish faiths. They understand the importance of these to believers for example the cross and the fish sign to Christians and the menorah and star of David to Jews.

144. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The work is planned carefully and teachers have appropriately high expectation of their pupils in oral sessions. They lead discussions sensitively and provide opportunities for pupils across the range of ability to extend their thinking and make links with the secular world. As a result of the very good relationships that exist, pupils offer ideas and suggestions confidently, listen to each other well and exchange ideas. Pupils respond with interest in both key stages. They show respect for the views of others and their contributions in discussion indicate that they reflect on what they hear. Religious education makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
145. Generally, progress over time is satisfactory. However, work in pupils' books indicates that pupils across the range of ability are often set the same tasks, such as recording information they have been given or stories they have been told. Worksheets predominate at the expense of pupils recording their own ideas. There is some evidence of independent writing by older pupils that enables them to make good progress. As a result of the way the curriculum is planned, with all ages studying the same theme concurrently, good use is made of loaned resources, books and artefacts. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. When the range of work is considered across the age groups, however, it is not always clear how the work builds from one class to another.
146. There is currently no permanent subject leader and the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus is currently being revised. This had led to a situation where the subject has a relatively low profile in school. The school intends to revise its own scheme as soon as the new syllabus arrives. This is timely. The current scheme is imperfectly understood by some teachers. Some weaknesses in the teaching are arising as a result. Some teachers concentrate on what pupils will do in the lesson, for example, but lose sight of the religious education objectives.