

INSPECTION REPORT

GUNTHORPE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gunthorpe, Peterborough

LEA area: Peterborough

Unique reference number: 110730

Headteacher: Miss M A King

Reporting inspector: Mr M Johnstone
21114

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 193842

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: The Pentlands
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs J Butler

Date of previous inspection: April 1997

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1112	Mr P Oldfield	Lay inspector		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?
27426	Mr T Aldridge	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
24019	Mr K Parry	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
21450	Mr D Kilborn	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Geography History Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Gunthorpe Primary School is a community primary school for pupils aged four to eleven. It is situated in the northern area of Peterborough in an urban area of mixed housing with features of social deprivation. There are 276 pupils on roll consisting of 128 girls and 148 boys. At the time of the inspection, there were 51 children under the age of six in two reception classes (Foundation Stage). Testing of children soon after entry into the reception classes indicates that attainment on entry for the current group of pupils is average with the full range of ability represented. However previous groups of pupils entering the school were below average. Almost all the pupils are of white UK heritage. There are three Chinese pupils who have English as an additional language. Only one of these pupils needs additional support to learn to speak English. Twelve per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. Ten per cent of the pupils (below average) are on the register of special educational needs. Two pupils (about average) have a statement of special educational needs. Four pupils have been identified as talented and receive additional teaching support in mathematics. Three teachers are on temporary contracts and the school has had some difficulty in filling permanent teaching staff vacancies.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is providing a sound education. The headteacher and staff have done well to raise standards over the past few years despite difficulties experienced in recruiting staff. Pupils in the infants achieve well in reading and writing and standards in mathematics are above the national average by the age of eleven. Standards in religious education, information and communication technology and design and technology are not yet high enough. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some very good teaching in the reception classes and towards the end of the infants and juniors. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and very good attendance have a marked effect on their learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children are given a very good start to their school life in the reception classes.
- Pupils in the infants achieve well in reading and writing and standards in mathematics are above average by the age of eleven.
- The headteacher and staff, supported very effectively by the learning support assistants, work well together and are committed to improvement.
- There is some very good teaching in the reception classes and at the end of the infants and juniors.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and very good attendance support their learning effectively.
- There is very good financial planning and administrative and clerical support.

What could be improved

- Standards in religious education and design and technology in the infants and juniors, and standards in information and communication technology and pupils' writing in the juniors.
- The role of the governing body in influencing the work of the school.
- The organisation and effectiveness of the senior management team and the co-ordination of subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Bearing in mind the staffing difficulties faced by the school, there has been good overall improvement since the last inspection in 1997. The trend in the school's performance in National Curriculum tests for English, mathematics and science has mirrored the national upward trend. The school has raised standards in science throughout the school and standards in information and communication technology are now average in the infants. Good in-service training has improved the teachers' expertise and knowledge in these subjects. There has been some effective monitoring of teaching but this has not been regular or sharp enough. Lesson planning has improved and teachers are now clear

about what the pupils should learn in each lesson. Resources for the library, music and physical education have been improved, but resources for religious education still need improving. The capacity for improvement is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	B	D	E
mathematics	C	C	B	B
science	C	B	B	B

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

Children enter the school with attainment that is broadly average with the full range of ability represented. From this starting point, children of all abilities achieve well and are on course to attain the early learning goals in all areas of their learning.

In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils did well to achieve above average standards in reading and well above average standards in writing. Standards in mathematics were similar to the national average. Boys did better than girls in mathematics. Over the past three years, there has been good improvement in reading and writing and reasonable improvement in mathematics. The work pupils were doing during the inspection confirmed these standards, although there was no significant difference in the work of the boys and girls. In 2001, teachers assessed standards in science as above the national average, although inspection evidence indicates that current standards are similar to the national average.

In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, standards for eleven-year-olds in mathematics and science were high enough to be above the national average and those in similar schools. In English, they were not high enough, being below the national average and well below those in similar schools. Whilst the percentage of pupils reaching the national level in English was similar to the national average, few pupils reached the higher level. Over the past three years, there has been a steady overall improvement in English but improvement has been more marked in mathematics and science. There has been no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Inspection evidence indicates that standards for the pupils who are now in school are better in English. Overall standards in the subject are similar to the national average and more pupils are on course to attain the higher levels in the subject. Some weaknesses remain in writing. In mathematics, evidence from the inspection indicates above average standards. In science, standards are similar to the national average. Pupils have a good knowledge base but do not apply this enough in investigative work. The school met its targets for English and mathematics in 2001 and is on course to achieve its realistic and improved targets for 2002.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) meet national expectations in the infants but are below the level expected by the age of eleven. In the infants and juniors, standards in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology are below average. In all other subjects, the work seen during the inspection was similar to that expected for seven- and eleven-year-olds. Some good work was seen in art, music and gymnastics.

Pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are supported effectively and make sound progress in all subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like school and enjoy learning. Children in the Foundation Stage settle well and quickly become familiar with school routines.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of the children in the Foundation Stage is exemplary. In the infants and juniors, behaviour out of classrooms is very good and in almost all lessons, it is good.
Personal development and relationships	The good relationships throughout the school are firmly based on mutual trust and respect. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Very good.

Whilst pupils take on the opportunities to develop responsibility eagerly, teachers do not provide enough activities to extend this area of their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

Overall, the quality of teaching is sound and meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. Almost all the teaching was at least satisfactory and about half was at least good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when there was more unsatisfactory teaching and less that was very good. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. There was some very good teaching towards the end of the infants and juniors. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is sound and there is effective help from learning support assistants. Reading is taught well in the infants and juniors. Writing is taught well in the infants and satisfactorily in the juniors. In the juniors, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length across all subjects. The teaching of mathematics is sound. There is good teaching of basic number skills in both the infants and juniors but teachers do not develop these skills strongly enough through investigations.

General strengths in teaching and learning across the school are:

- relationships that give pupils confidence to learn, knowing that their efforts will be valued;
- the establishment of a good work ethic and classroom management that gives a strong foundation for learning;
- good subject knowledge that enables pupils to develop good vocabulary, basic skills and a good knowledge base.

General weaknesses relate to:

- review sessions that miss opportunities to explore strengths and weaknesses in what has been learnt;
- teaching methods that rely too heavily on the development of knowledge and basic skills at the expense of investigative work, pupil discussion about their work, and initiative and personal research.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced. All statutory requirements are met. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. All statutory requirements are met but monitoring is not tight enough. The co-ordinator has insufficient time to fulfil her role.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Only one pupil requires additional support and this is effective in ensuring good progress is made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Moral development is good, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. This aspect of their development is not built into the school's policies and planning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. This is a school that cares very well for all its pupils. There are good examples of methods to find out how well pupils are doing but they are used inconsistently in the infants and juniors. These methods are good in the Foundation Stage and are used well to develop learning.

There is a satisfactory partnership with the parents of pupils in the infants and juniors. The partnership with parents of children in the Foundation Stage is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are sound overall. Standards have risen in line with the national upward trend and good teamwork and commitment have been established. Senior management roles need to be reviewed in order to focus more sharply on school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily but their role in shaping the direction of the school and holding it accountable for its performance is underdeveloped. Frequent changes recently in the membership of the governing body have slowed down developments in these areas.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good analysis of pupils' performance in national and school-based tests has given the school a good general view of its work. Monitoring has not been sharp enough to evaluate what works well and what does not in teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good and the headteacher, financial adviser and the school administrator have a firm grip on the purse strings. The budget is used well to support educational priorities and all grants are used for their designated purposes. Day-to-day administration is very good and enables teachers to get on with the job of teaching.

There is sound understanding of the principles of best value. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is good and is maintained to a high standard. Most resources are used well, although more could be made of the library and classroom computers. There are shortages in the resources for design and technology and religious education.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Behaviour is good and the school expects children to work hard. • Teaching is good and they would feel comfortable approaching the school with a question or problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The partnership between school and parents. • The information they receive about their children's progress.

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views. The range of activities outside lessons is judged to be satisfactory and similar to the range provided in most primary schools. The information parents receive and the partnership with parents are satisfactory but more could be done to strengthen these aspects of the school's work.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment on entry for children at the school has been below average. However, the school's testing of the current group of pupils in the reception classes indicates average attainment with the full range represented. From this base, children achieve well as a result of consistently good teaching. By the age of six, most are well on course to attain the early learning goals in their personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development.

- 2 Pupils achieved well in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds:
 - in reading, standards were high enough to be above average when compared to both the national average and those in similar schools;
 - in writing, standards were well above both the national average and those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was also well above average;
 - standards in mathematics were similar to the national average and high enough to be comparable with standards in similar schools. Boys did better than girls in mathematics;
 - over the past three years, there has been good improvement in reading and writing and reasonable improvement in mathematics.

The work pupils were doing during the inspection confirmed these standards, although there was no significant difference in the work of boys and girls.

- 3 In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds:
 - standards in English were not high enough being below the national average and well below those in similar schools;
 - whilst the percentage of pupils reaching the national Level 4 was similar to the national average, not enough pupils reached the higher Level 5;
 - in mathematics, standards were high enough to be above the national average and those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well above average. Boys did particularly well;
 - standards in science were high enough to be above the national average and those in similar schools.

4. In the juniors, inspection evidence indicates some differences in the work pupils were doing during the inspection. Standards in English are now high enough to be similar to the national average. There are more pupils on course to achieve the higher level. For the group of pupils who took the 2001 tests, there were twice as many boys as girls, and boys in particular did not achieve well in writing. Although weaknesses still remain, this issue is recognised and is being targeted. In science, standards are similar to the national average. While pupils develop a good scientific knowledge, they are not good at applying this in investigative work. This is because teachers do not provide enough opportunities in this aspect of the work. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory with some good progress in aspects of their work.

5. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection and taking all subjects together, there is an upward trend in line with the national trend. In English and mathematics, the school is on course to reach its appropriately challenging targets for 2002 and 2003. At all stages, and in all subjects, pupils who have special educational needs and English as an additional language make similar progress to all other pupils. Effective additional support from learning support assistants ensures they have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. The four pupils who have been recognised as gifted in mathematics receive good additional support in the subject and this boosts their progress well at these times.
6. By the ages of seven and eleven, standards in speaking and listening are average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Most pupils speak clearly and listen attentively to what others have to say. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language, know that their contributions will be valued and this successfully develops their confidence. Teachers do not develop role play, discussion, debate and drama enough in literacy lessons and in other subjects of the curriculum. This limits the development of speaking and listening skills, particularly for the average and above average pupils.
7. Teachers build on the good start pupils make with their reading in the Foundation Stage so that by the age of seven, standards are above average and all pupils achieve well. They enjoy reading and develop good fluency and accuracy using their knowledge of letter sounds effectively to read unfamiliar words. Average and above average pupils know how to locate information in reference books. By the age of eleven, standards are similar to the national average and pupils' achievements are sound overall. All pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy and average and above average pupils are competent readers of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Average and above average pupils are able to predict what might happen in a story by referring to elements of the story that they have already read. The below average pupils and those with special educational needs make sound progress and develop their knowledge of letter sounds to split up words into small parts to help them read unfamiliar words. Most pupils understand the purpose of a contents, index and glossary and are able to retrieve information from non-fiction books satisfactorily. Pupils do not use their reference skills enough in independent research across the subjects of the curriculum.
8. In writing, all pupils achieve well in the infants and by the age of seven, standards in handwriting, spelling and grammar are good. The below average pupils and those with special educational needs are given additional support to help them with their writing and they achieve well. Basic writing skills developed in the infants are built on satisfactorily in the juniors, and pupils' achievements are sound. Handwriting, spelling and grammar develop well and all pupils present their work neatly in a consistent joined script. Pupils do not use their writing skills in extended pieces of writing across all subjects. This leads to some lack of enthusiasm for writing and consequently pupils do not achieve as well as they might.
9. By the ages of seven and eleven most pupils have sound mental mathematics skills and add, subtract, multiply and divide increasingly large numbers accurately. Pupils achieve well in their understanding of number and algebra and develop competency in understanding shape, space and measures and data handling. Most average and above average pupils achieve well in their understanding of the link between equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals. Above average pupils use this understanding well to solve challenging everyday problems. In general, pupils are not

so good at applying their mathematical knowledge in investigative work and in searching for solutions by trying out their own ideas.

10. By the age of eleven, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average. Key skills have not been developed progressively from year to year and computers in classrooms are not used enough to consolidate and extend learning across all subjects. More consistent development of skills in the infants has lifted overall standards to the level expected nationally. In the infants and juniors, standards in art and design, history, geography, music and physical education are similar to those expected for pupils' age. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Standards in these subjects have been maintained since the last inspection. Weaknesses in the provision for design and technology noted at the time of the last inspection have been improved but standards remain below average at ages seven and eleven and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. No judgement was made about religious education at the time of the last inspection. On the basis of the evidence from this inspection, standards are below those required by the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' overall achievements are unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The school has done well to maintain, and in some respects improve, these aspects of its work since the last inspection. These aspects of their development enhance pupils' learning. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection felt that behaviour in the school was good.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage settle well into the school and become familiar with class routines and expectancies of behaviour. Their behaviour is exemplary and they play and work well together. They are good at sharing toys and equipment and co-operate well with their teachers, learning support assistants and other pupils. These aspects of their development provide a strong foundation for their learning.
13. In the infants and juniors, pupils enjoy school and are eager to attend. Most have good attitudes towards their learning and take part enthusiastically in all activities. Pupils are polite, friendly and love chatting to visitors. They work well independently and when working in pairs, they help each other complete work. For example, when working on computers, two pupils in a Year 2 literacy lesson took turns in using the keyboard and mouse sensibly to complete work on a description of a character they had studied. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated into the school and work and play happily with all other pupils. The school has provided a very good working environment and pupils show respect and care for the buildings and equipment. There are no signs of any graffiti or damage around the school.
14. Behaviour is good and in the few instances when a small number of pupils misbehave, teachers and learning support assistants deal with them fairly and effectively. When behaviour occasionally falls below these high standards in lessons, it is usually due to activities that fail to inspire the pupils or inconsistencies by teachers in making expectations clear to them. Very good behaviour was seen throughout the lunchtime, in assemblies and in the playground, where pupils did show a careful awareness of others and of the activities going on around them. There have been no exclusions, and no incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. In discussions, pupils knew what to do should such incidents occur. All pupils understand the effect of their actions on others. Relationships throughout the school are good and based firmly on mutual trust and respect.

15. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Where opportunities are presented, pupils are pleased to take an active role in the daily life of the school. They act as register monitors, for example, and older pupils assist younger pupils at lunchtimes. They dine together and play with them in the playground. Older pupils, particularly, recognise that suitable conduct is necessary at all times, and they have become involved in adopting suitable class rules, agreed by them. There were, however, very few opportunities seen for pupils to fully discuss their work as part of a group or engage in drama, role play or debate. There is no forum for the older pupils to have a say in the way the school operates through, for example, a school council.
16. Pupils who have special educational needs have a positive attitude to school and are usually interested and enthusiastic in their lessons. They show good respect for each other's work and feelings and are positive about each other's efforts. Most relate very well to others and are willing to talk about their work. They are fully involved and included in the range of activities that the school provides and their independence is encouraged. They respond well to the way in which teachers and learning support assistants help them to overcome difficulties. They gain much confidence when they realise they are making good progress. Teachers know the personal circumstances of individual pupils well and this ensures that they are supported sensitively.
17. Attendance at the school is very good and is well above the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence. This is a key factor in pupils' attainment and progress. Most pupils are punctual. Attendance has improved markedly since the last inspection when it was satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is sound overall and meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and meets the needs of all pupils well. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching in the infants and juniors where the teaching is mostly satisfactory. In the 64 lessons observed across all classes, three per cent were excellent, 16 per cent were very good, 31 per cent were good and 48 per cent were satisfactory. One lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory. All lessons seen in the Foundation Stage were at least good with 50 per cent being very good and eight per cent being excellent. Some very good teaching was seen towards the end of the infants and juniors. At all stages, the teaching of pupils who have special educational needs and English as an additional language is satisfactory and there is effective help from learning support assistants that enables them to keep up with their work and make similar progress to the other pupils. There has been improvement in certain aspects of teaching which were judged to be weak at the last inspection. This relates to planning, the development of subject expertise and clarity about what pupils are expected to learn in lessons.
19. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers prepare their lessons well with an exciting range of appropriate resources that stimulate children of all abilities into active learning. The pace of lessons is good, relationships are very good and learning support assistants are used very well to support all aspects of class work. Teachers care very well for their children and provide activities that are well suited to individual needs. Lessons always have due regard to health and safety and good classroom organisation ensures all children receive equal access to learning. Children are given good opportunities to develop their physical skills in class and in the hall, but activities in the designated outdoor play area are not structured enough and some teaching and learning opportunities are missed.

20. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in mathematics and in English where pupils are grouped and taught in ability sets. This helps teachers provide a sound match of work to their abilities. In other subjects, when teaching support is not available, work is not always matched sufficiently well to pupils' needs and they often do the same work as other pupils in the class. Whilst most are able to cope with this and make sound gains in their learning, some find the work too difficult and do not always progress as well as they might. At these times, teachers do not pay enough attention to the targets in the pupils' individual education plans. Support from learning support assistants is good and they are fully aware of pupils' needs and targets. There are regular, termly reviews and assessments so that pupils' needs are regularly updated. Good attention is given to motivating, rewarding and praising pupils and building their self-esteem. As a result pupils remain involved in the lesson and try hard, despite their difficulties. Pupils are fully included and integrated into all school activities. Teachers do not use computers enough to support the learning for these pupils.
21. At all stages, the teaching of basic literacy skills is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors. All teachers value pupils' contributions in whole class discussions and ensure all listen to what others have to say. This develops pupils' speaking and listening skills effectively. There are, however, not enough opportunities to develop these skills in role play, drama, debate and group discussion. Teachers develop good basic skills in reading and writing in the infants and this leads to good standards and achievement. These are developed satisfactorily by the teachers in the juniors. However, in the teaching of writing, junior teachers rely too heavily on the development of formal writing exercises at the expense of creative and extended non-narrative writing. Pupils are not encouraged enough to write at length in subjects such as history, geography, science and religious education. This places some limitations on learning since pupils are not encouraged to develop and use their writing skills more widely. Classrooms do not celebrate good writing enough in displays of work.
22. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory overall with some good teaching of basic number skills in both the infants and juniors. Teachers do not develop these skills strongly enough through mathematical investigation. The majority of teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to develop pupils' mathematical vocabulary well. Lessons are well structured with consistent planning of the recommended three-part numeracy hour well established. The opening and closing sessions, however, are sometimes rushed and lose some of their effectiveness. The grouping of pupils into ability sets ensures that there is usually a secure match of work to pupils' abilities.
23. Teaching and learning in science is satisfactory overall. At all stages, teachers develop pupils' scientific knowledge well. They have good expertise in this aspect of their teaching and develop pupils' scientific vocabulary well, building effectively on previous learning. Teachers, however, provide too few opportunities for the pupils to apply and extend their knowledge in work involving enquiry and investigation.
24. Whilst the teaching of religious education was satisfactory in the lessons observed during the inspection, the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that there are weaknesses in teaching. Key skills and knowledge are not taught systematically from year to year and pupils' progress is uneven and generally unsatisfactory as a result. In all other subjects, teaching is at least satisfactory with some good teaching and learning in art and design, music and gymnastics.

25. In general, key strengths in teaching and learning across all subjects are:
- relationships that develop confidence in the pupils and lead to a pleasant learning environment;
 - clear explanations so that pupils know what they are expected to learn;
 - good questioning that develops pupils' understanding. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher asks 'why wasn't Mrs Barn Owl pleased with Plop?' and in a Years 5 and 6 numeracy set, the teacher asks 'tell us how you worked out the area of the irregular shape?';
 - the establishment of a good work ethic and classroom management that gives a strong foundation for learning;
 - good subject knowledge that enables pupils to develop good vocabulary, basic skills and a good knowledge base;
 - the support provided by the learning support assistants, particularly for the below average and special educational needs pupils;
 - some good marking and use of assessment that shows pupils how their work might be improved and target areas for improvement in subsequent lessons.
26. General weaknesses in teaching and learning across the infants and juniors relate to:
- review sessions that miss opportunities to explore strengths and weaknesses in what has been learnt;
 - teaching methods that rely too heavily on the development of knowledge and basic skills at the expense of investigative work, pupil discussion about their work, and initiative and personal research;
 - the use of classroom computers to consolidate and extend pupils' learning across all subjects;
 - inconsistencies in the use of assessment to inform subsequent lesson planning.

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

27. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well founded on the early learning goals for pupils of this age. It provides a good range of stimulating, enriching experiences for the children and prepares them well for their work on the National Curriculum.
28. The curriculum for pupils in the infants and juniors is soundly established and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education. There is a satisfactory range of visits out of the classroom and visitors to the school. These extend the curriculum beyond the classroom successfully. The provision for sex and drugs education and for personal, social and health education is sound. Useful guidance for teachers about teaching citizenship is being developed. The school is to be involved in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative this term. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced and there are some clear links developing between subjects.
29. There are satisfactory policies for all subjects that have recently been revised. These provide useful guidance for teachers in the planning of their work. Subject planning and guidance, which was identified as an area for development at the time of the last inspection, are much improved and now provide a secure planning base. National guidance is being incorporated appropriately into the planning framework and has been adapted to the needs of the school. In those subjects with a designated co-

ordinator, planning is carefully monitored to ensure it meets national requirements. In other subjects, this is undertaken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

30. The curriculum is socially inclusive and successfully incorporates all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, none of who are at the early stages of English acquisition. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The school complies with the recommended Code of Practice and devises satisfactory programmes of support to meet the individual needs of most pupils. However, some of the targets are not sufficiently detailed and there is little reference to these in teachers' lesson planning. Pupils' progress towards the objectives outlined in their individual education plans is carefully reviewed at least every six months. Two pupils in need of additional support in learning receive good support. All pupils identified as having special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life.
31. Strategies for teaching basic literacy are satisfactory and for numeracy they are good. The school gives high priority to developing basic skills in these areas and both are helping to raise standards. However, there is still the potential to adapt the teaching of literacy so as to provide more opportunities to develop pupils' skills in independent writing, drama, role play, debate and discussion.
32. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities such as football, netball, Kwik cricket and cross-country running and older pupils take part in inter-school fixtures. There is sewing for the younger pupils. All these activities have a positive effect on the pupils' social development. All activities are well supported and popular but are mainly of a sporting nature and for older pupils. A sound range of educational visits within the local area, for example to museums and wildlife areas, further enhances curriculum provision.
33. There are satisfactory links with the local community. The community police visit regularly to talk to year groups on various topics, including drugs education and personal safety. The school nurse and health visitor assist in the teaching of sex education for the older pupils. Visits are made to the local church and cathedral and Peterborough United Football Club visit as part of football in the community scheme. Friends of the school also help on occasions with cultural and multicultural activities such as World War Two memorabilia and the celebration of festivals. These links add to pupils' knowledge of the environment outside school and help to develop their social and cultural understanding.
34. The school has satisfactory links with other educational establishments in the area. There are sound induction procedures with local playgroups. There are good relationships with the nearby secondary and special schools with students using Gunthorpe for work experience. Secondary pupils entertain the pupils with drama and music productions. The good relationship effectively aids transfer at age eleven. The school is developing the opportunities available through the Internet in extending pupils' learning, for example in geography and history.
35. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall with moral provision a strength and spiritual a weakness.
36. The provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory and this is an area recognised by the school for development. Arrangements are in place for daily acts of worship and this ensures that legal requirements are met. However, there is no whole school approach to ensure that provision is of a broadly Christian nature and that opportunities are provided for reflection and spiritual development. Except for a

whole school singing assembly on a Wednesday, led by the music teacher, responsibility in the juniors is left to individual teachers to deliver collective worship in their classrooms. There is no monitoring to ensure that this actually happens, or to assess its quality. Provision is good in the infants where pupils meet together most days. Good opportunities are provided for reflection and celebration of achievements and special events. In lessons across the school there are few planned opportunities to develop spiritual awareness, and reflection in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, art and design and music are often missed. For example, few opportunities are provided for pupils to experience investigative work in science and mathematics, and through these subjects, experience awe and wonder. Displays of objects from other faiths provide some opportunities for pupils to reflect on, and develop respect for, different beliefs.

37. Provision for moral development is good. The school effectively promotes the principles which distinguish right from wrong, fairness and honesty. This is an area that particularly pleases parents. The school works hard to promote and reward good behaviour and to raise pupils' self-esteem. Clear rules are displayed in all classrooms and all staff promote good behaviour by following the school's discipline policy. Positive behaviour and work is rewarded by merits which progress towards bronze, silver, gold and special certificates. Pupils also have opportunities to reflect on the part they play in making the school a friendly and supportive community. Personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to listen to stories dealing with morality, discuss issues and establish codes of behaviour. This has a positive influence on relationships in the school.
38. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop socially and increase their understanding of living in a community. Within their classrooms, pupils carry out a range of tasks that encourage them to take responsibility and help each other. However, there are few opportunities for the majority of older pupils to have responsibilities in and around the school, develop initiative and independence, and take part in the school's decision-making processes. The extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for older pupils to work co-operatively and to take part in inter-school sporting activities. All adults in the school provide good role models and work positively with pupils.
39. There is satisfactory provision for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions but there are limited opportunities for them to appreciate the richness of other cultures. The school ensures pupils gain valuable first-hand experience of different cultures through visits to museums and places of interest. A range of visitors to school, including musicians and theatre groups, representatives of the police and the health service, also extend pupils' cultural development well. In geography, pupils learn about life in the immediate locality and in contrasting localities, for example a mountain region. In history, they learn about some of the important cultures and events in the past, for example the Romans, Vikings, Tudors and Victorians. These lessons make valuable contributions to their wider cultural understanding. However, pupils have limited opportunities to learn about the diversity of cultures in this country and around the world. Religious education, art and design and music do not make a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of other cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The strengths outlined in the last report have been maintained. The school offers a safe and friendly environment where pupils of all ages, abilities and ethnic backgrounds are valued. Very good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils'

welfare. Teachers and learning support assistants have a genuine concern for all pupils, whatever their needs, and work well with individuals and groups to promote learning. A senior teacher is the designated person for child protection, and is very aware of the procedures and requirements of the local area child protection committee. Concerns about any pupil are logged and appropriate support is given.

41. There is a comprehensive and effective health and safety policy. This helps to ensure the welfare of all pupils. Appropriate risk and equipment safety assessments are undertaken. The school has a high number of teachers and ancillary staff who have basic first aid qualifications and this adds significantly to the high level of care available to the pupils. Minor accidents are dealt with very efficiently. Parents are informed in writing about injuries sustained by their children in line with school policy.
42. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Appropriate contact is maintained with the educational welfare services. Good attendance is expected and parents fully support their children to this end. Adult supervision is always on hand and teachers and learning support assistants give good pastoral care. All adults are good role models and pupils feel confident to approach them with any problems. The comprehensive and effective behaviour policy has appropriate rewards and sanctions, including a specific policy on bullying.
43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. There are some opportunities for older pupils to express any concerns in the school's personal, social and health education programme which includes a 'have your say' section. Teachers have agreed ground rules and have high expectations of pupils, which have been well proven. Pupils are well supervised in the school and all adults effectively support them. From entry into the reception classes, teachers take a very keen interest in the wellbeing of all pupils and give good support at all times throughout their school life.
44. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment across the school are satisfactory overall and good for children in the Foundation Stage. There has been satisfactory development of assessment procedures since the last inspection. Soon after entry to the reception classes the local authority framework is used well to establish a good base from which to judge the progress of individual children. This information is used effectively to group children and provide work that matches their needs successfully.
45. In the infant and junior departments, a number of useful procedures have been introduced which relate to assessing individual units of work across a range of subjects. Where these are used consistently, they are effective. In English, mathematics and science, there has been careful analysis of results from optional and statutory national tests and this has been used well to target individual pupils and track their progress. Some teachers have introduced individual targets for pupils that enable them to assess how well they are doing. The impact of assessment data on planning pupils' work, however, would be stronger if these systems were applied more consistently.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents. Parents generally support the school but the partnership is not as strong as reported at the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be good. An appropriate home/school agreement was sent out to parents but very few returned this. The parent questionnaires sent out prior to the

inspection were generally supportive and parents seen at the school during the inspection week expressed support for the school. There were, however, a few concerns expressed in the questionnaires.

47. Some parents did not feel that they were fully informed about how their children were getting on. A significant minority felt that the school did not work closely enough with them and did not provide enough interesting activities outside lessons. Inspection findings show that formal opportunities to meet teachers are provided three times each year and this is in line with what most schools offer. In addition, teachers are available at any reasonable time to discuss pupils' progress. There are good opportunities for parents of children just starting school to meet with teachers, and teachers hold meetings with parents of Year 6 pupils to inform them about starting secondary education. Pupils' annual reports of progress are satisfactory; they give an account of the work that pupils have done and where necessary an appropriate level is stated for comparison with national levels. The better reports also give indications of how the child's work might be improved.
48. Inspectors judge that the range and number of activities outside lessons is satisfactory and similar to what is offered in most schools. A sewing club is held for younger children and there is a sport's club and art club for older children. Staff recruitment difficulties have curtailed some developments in this direction but the school has continued football, hockey, netball and athletics fixtures in this period.
49. Inspectors feel that the link with parents could be strengthened in some areas. Whilst parents have the opportunity to help pupils with some aspects of their homework, for example spelling and mathematics work, they are not fully involved in reading development at home, particularly in the juniors. There is no reading diary in which they can comment on their child's progress. Regular newsletters are sent out and keep parents aware of major events in school. However, they are not particularly attractively presented or reader friendly.
50. A small group of parents has kept the Parent Teacher Association working over a few years. Recently, some attempts have been made to give the association a higher profile and an initial meeting between all parties did attempt to provide a programme and introduce newer parents into these worthwhile activities. Few parents help in the school but parents give help willingly at specific events and attend in large numbers, for example to see the exhibition evening. There are current vacancies for parent governors. The annual report of the governors and the school's brochure are being re-drafted to reflect the good work being done in the school and allow parents to fully understand what the school is trying to achieve.
51. Procedures to ensure that parents are involved in the identification, assessment and review of those pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Parents are given the opportunity to be involved in the review procedures during termly parent/teacher consultations, and at other times when necessary.
52. Parents of children in the Foundation Stage have very good relationships with teachers and work closely with this area of the school to promote the education of their children. They are supportive and use the home/school books well to help with reading and small research projects.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are sound overall. The headteacher has secured good teamwork and commitment from the hardworking staff to ensure that the school runs smoothly. She is clear about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and has established some effective ways of securing improvement. The headteacher and key staff have kept standards rising in line with the national trend and brought some improvements in the quality of teaching.
54. Through no fault of its own, recent uncertainties in the staffing situation have led the school to employ numbers of temporary and supply staff. As a result, the bulk of the management workload has fallen to the headteacher and a small nucleus of experienced members of staff. In these circumstances the school has done well to ensure that the rate of overall improvement since the last inspection has been good, even though in some areas, for example religious education and design and technology, improvement has not been rapid enough. Now that these staffing difficulties are being resolved, the time is right to review the roles of the senior management team and other staff to ensure a more equitable distribution of responsibilities. Teachers and support staff are committed to improvement and are open to suggestions. The capacity for further improvement is good.
55. Through her regular teaching commitment the headteacher has a firm grasp of the standards achieved by pupils. In addition, she and the deputy headteacher undertake regular and frequent checks of pupils' workbooks in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. These have enabled appropriate support to be put in place for particular classes and individual pupils as necessary.
56. The last inspection judged the monitoring of classroom teaching to be a key issue for improvement. Whilst the headteacher and deputy headteacher have seen some teaching across the school, there is still no systematic programme of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. The co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have had few opportunities to observe teaching over the past two years. As a result they have not identified weaknesses in the final review sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons. Current monitoring is not sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and examples of good practice are not shared enough so any shortcomings can be addressed. This is particularly important since three teachers are newly qualified. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science do undertake thorough analyses of national and internal tests and they monitor teachers' planning. The results of this are shared with colleagues in order to improve their teaching. This has helped to identify areas for development, for example weaknesses in pupils' independent writing opportunities across the curriculum. However, the current roles and responsibilities of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators, including the co-ordinator for special educational needs, does not include the regular and rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in all classes. This makes it difficult for them to see clearly what is working well and what is not in teaching and learning and remains an area for further development.
57. The headteacher knows the main strengths and weaknesses of the school well and as a result there were no surprises for her in the inspection findings. The school's priorities for development have been identified clearly in the school improvement plan. However, the plan lacks the sharp focus and detail that is necessary to guide the work of co-ordinators and others who are involved in taking the school forward. The school has a clear set of aims and values that are reflected in the good relationships, the secure and friendly learning environment and the pride in the school shared by adults, pupils and the majority of parents.

58. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management provision. She is knowledgeable, conscientious and committed, but has not monitored the special educational needs provision in lessons. This makes it difficult for her to form an overview of the effectiveness of the provision. There is a valuable weekly meeting with all learning support assistants before school on Thursday mornings where knowledge of pupils and any problems and forthcoming training or needs is discussed. This is good practice and ensures all staff work together in meeting the needs of these pupils.
59. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good and have a significant impact on the children's standards and progress and the quality of teaching. There is excellent liaison between the two reception classes and effective joint planning which involves all learning support assistants who work in the classes. There is good provision of resources which significantly impacts on children's learning.
60. After a delayed start, performance management systems are now well established and the school is on course to complete its first cycle. All teachers have met with their appraisers to establish the focus for their teaching observations and have agreed their individual targets.
61. The role of the governing body is underdeveloped. Frequent changes recently in the membership of the governing body partially account for the difficulties. Under the leadership of the chairperson they are now beginning to gain an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In order to support her fellow governors in this, she has produced a helpful code of conduct for governors and useful guidelines to support governor visits to the school. At present, however, governors are not influential in shaping the direction of the school or in holding it accountable for its work. They are not yet sufficiently involved in the day-to-day work of the school.
62. Financial planning is very good and the headteacher, financial adviser and the school administrator have a firm grip on the purse strings. They have a clear long-term view of finances while sustaining their intention to provide the best they can for pupils currently at the school. They have a good understanding of the principles of best value and this is evident in the effective tendering process and the procedures followed recently when seeking to change the school's payroll arrangements. The few minor recommendations in the latest auditor's report have been acted upon. The budget is used well to support educational priorities and all grants are used for their designated purposes. The governors' sub-committees, however, including the finance committee, do not meet regularly enough to fulfil their monitoring roles effectively.
63. Day-to-day administration is very good and diverts most routine tasks away from the teachers. This frees them to concentrate on teaching rather than inappropriate administrative work. While the school makes good use of new technologies for administration and in the school's computer suite, classroom based computers are not used widely enough to support pupils' learning.
64. The school's staffing has a good impact on the standards which pupils attain and on the quality of their education. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum satisfactorily. There is effective in-service training but staff changes have caused some disruption to the

programme. Support staff for pupils who have been identified as needing additional help are well trained, experienced and provide very good levels of support.

65. The accommodation is very good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is adequate space for the number on roll. The school benefits from extensive grassed and hard play areas, which are used well for sporting activities. Additional internal space inside the school has been used to create a library, computer suite, art room and general work areas for groups of pupils. Most of these are used well by all pupils, although the library is not used enough to develop pupils' research skills. In most areas, learning resources support the curriculum well but there are shortcomings in those for design and technology and religious education. The new computer suite is beginning to have an impact upon standards in information and communication technology. The school is very well maintained and cleaned to a high standard by the caretaking staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 66 In order to improve standards and the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- 1) Raise standards in information and communication technology and in pupils' writing in the juniors by:

- a) in ICT, providing opportunities for pupils to develop skills in data handling, multi-media presentations, monitoring, the use of the Internet and sending and receiving e-mails;
- b) ensuring that key skills are developed progressively from one year to the next and using classroom computers more to consolidate and extend learning in all subjects;
- c) in writing, providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in extended pieces of narrative and non-narrative work across all subjects;
- d) providing greater stimulation for pupils to write by celebrating good writing in displays in all classrooms and setting specific individual targets for pupils.
(paragraphs 4, 8, 11, 21, 45, 76, 81, 82, 84, 91, 100, 119, 120, 122)

- 2) Raise standards in religious education and design and technology throughout the school by:

- a) in both subjects, planning and delivering consistent opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and skills systematically from year to year;
- b) in design and technology, providing pupils with more opportunities to work with a wider variety of materials, tools and techniques and providing encouragement for them to evaluate and modify their work in order to improve the finished product;
- c) in religious education, improving pupils' ability to talk about what they have learned using specialist vocabulary;
- d) providing opportunities for them to respond in a variety of ways including words, music, movement, art and drama and developing key skills and knowledge consistently from one year to the next.
(paragraphs 10, 21, 106, 107, 108, 111, 113, 138, 139)

- 3) Develop the role of the governors in influencing the work of the school by:

- a) ensuring that they hold the school more accountable for its work;

- b) asking critical questions about pupils' performance and curriculum development and arranging more visits to the school with a specific focus in order to give a better overview of strengths and weaknesses.
(paragraphs 61, 62)
- 4) Improve the organisation and effectiveness of the senior management team and the co-ordination of subjects by:
 - a) reviewing roles to ensure a more equitable distribution of responsibilities;
 - b) developing a systematic programme of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning involving the key co-ordinators (including the co-ordinator for special educational needs), and sharing good practice to develop the skills of newly qualified teachers and other teachers who are new to the school.
(paragraphs 54, 56, 85, 92, 99, 113, 118, 124, 137,141)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should also consider the following less significant weaknesses in its action plan:

- a) Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and apply and extend their learning through investigative work, group discussion, debate, role play and drama across all subjects.
(paragraphs 4, 15, 21, 22, 23, 26, 77, 88, 94)
- b) Plan more effectively to the targets in the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs when additional support is not available.
(paragraphs 20, 30, 84)
- c) Improve the effectiveness of the final review sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons.
(paragraphs 26, 83)
- d) Ensure greater consistency in the assessment of pupils' progress and the use of information to plan subsequent lessons.
(paragraphs 26, 45, 90, 92, 100)
- e) Strengthen the partnership with parents.
(paragraphs 46, 47, 49)
- f) Improve the provision for the spiritual development of the pupils.
(paragraph 36)

(It is recognised that the school is aware of these issues and has begun to take some relevant action)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	10	20	31	1	0	0
Percentage	3	16	31	48	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	276
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	28

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.6

National comparative data	6.1
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National comparative data	5.6
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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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	10	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (93)	92 (93)	96 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	24	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (93)	96 (96)	96 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	25	10	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	18	22
	Girls	8	7	10
	Total	27	25	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (84)	71 (71)	91 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	19	23
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	28	27	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (77)	77 (74)	91 (84)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	269
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	25.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	148

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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	2000/2001
	£
Total income	487,929
Total expenditure	480,863
Expenditure per pupil	1,886
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,766

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	276
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	54	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	51	9	4	0
The teaching is good.	54	40	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	41	12	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	44	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	53	16	7	0
The school is well led and managed.	31	54	7	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	47	7	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	43	22	9	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

67. The school admits children to the two reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Many children have had experience of nursery education, and assessment on full-time entry indicates that children enter with broadly average attainment although the full range of attainment is represented. The school's baseline assessment of children's attainment indicates that they are in line with the county levels, although some groups of pupils across the school entered with below average attainment.
- 68 Children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in all the areas of learning as a result of very good teaching overall in the lessons seen. Most children are on course to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning, and a significant minority is on course to exceed them.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 69 Children experience a very wide range of opportunities to extend their learning in this area. Teaching in the lessons seen is good and children make good progress. Teachers have established very good routines and all children understand the importance of taking turns, sharing and giving others the opportunity to speak. Teachers enjoy very good support from the learning support assistants who make a good contribution to children's learning. Children learn to co-operate well. This was evident in a good lesson linked to Noah's Ark. The children were using a parachute to join together and create effects based on the language of a storm. Children learn about taking turns when in the shop role play area and share and give out equipment thoughtfully and carefully. They show good empathy when talking about the need to protect the animals of the world and show appropriate concerns and interests for other children's pets. They tidy up very well after practical sessions without direction and undress and dress themselves well when changing for movement lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

- 70 Children learn effectively and achieve well in this area of learning because teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan their lessons well and develop a wide range of skills. There is good use of role play to extend children's imagination, for example when they take it in turns to be shopkeepers and customers. The teachers use the sessions at the beginning and end of lessons to reinforce skills and ask questions to develop children's speaking and listening well. Registration sessions also support this area of learning well as children are expected to reply to questions about attendance, absence and school lunches in sentences. Teachers insist upon clear responses. Children in both classes listen and learn very well because teachers have very good relationships with their class, speak very clearly and use their voices very well to convey effects and emphasise meaning. Teachers provide a very good range of resources to stimulate children's imagination and use singing rhymes and traditional songs that extend children's vocabulary effectively. Early reading skills are developed effectively through good use of a range of attractive books. These are discussed skilfully with children in good question and answer sessions. For example the children commented 'Our favourite part of the story was when the farmer fell out of bed'. Children are taught to read and write simple words and practice letter sounds effectively in well-structured sessions. They distinguish between picture and print and

name contents and index pages successfully. There is sensitive and good support for the lower attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs and they also achieve well in this important aspect of their learning. Parents are encouraged to support their children in reading and looking at books and a home/school reading book tracks children's progress effectively. Average and above average children write their own name well and above average children copy simple sentences and compose their own 'pig' poems. The teachers and learning support assistants use computers well to teach the children letter sounds.

Mathematical development

- 71 Children experience a good range of opportunities to extend their mathematical learning. Teaching and learning are very good. Children use appropriate mathematical language well and good links to their literacy work on Noah's Ark enables them to count in twos up to ten successfully. Children use the class computers well to work out simple number problems showing appropriate control skills and recognising reward symbols. Good use of a range of mathematical resources by the teachers aids learning well and pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress when supported well by the learning support assistants. Average and above average children count up to and back from 20 accurately and below average children use blocks to build towers successfully counting the number of blocks they use correctly. The teachers use number lines and squares very effectively to 'miss out' and count on numbers from a given point. Planning is good and teachers use many counting rhymes and games well to promote children's understanding of number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 72 Teaching is good and all children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Through their work using different books and stories they learn of different animals and their habitats. They know about the weather and different seasons from daily first-hand observations and from their topic on Noah's Ark. They show a good awareness of the problems of flooding and build a variety of well-made shelters and houses for animals. When drawing self-portraits and looking at the differences between themselves now and when they were babies from photographs, children develop their concept of time and change effectively. They extend this when looking at old and new teddy bears. They have good understanding about new and household items from the past. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities, visitors and resources which makes learning interesting for the children and supports their understanding of the world. Children are encouraged to talk about their lives, families and the homes in which they live. They have good knowledge of the main features of the local area, such as shops, roads and the church. All children have experience using computers and develop good mouse and keyboard skills.

Physical development

- 73 Children make good progress in their physical development. When using the hall they show good control of their movements and many move in an expressive manner when matching their movements to those of different animals. They are aware of the need to warm up and of the effect that exercise has on their bodies. Teaching is good and the teachers enthusiastically join in the lessons moving with the children. Good use is made of individual children's work to demonstrate and make teaching points. This helps the progress of other children and encourages them to extend and refine their own movements. When working as a class on controlling a parachute, children

demonstrate very quick reactions to instructions and interpret well different movements of water before and after a storm. They show good agility in moving safely under the parachute in turns. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of their body. Children demonstrate good physical skills when cutting, pasting and drawing to build models of their own houses. When using a variety of construction apparatus, they demonstrate good dexterity and manipulation skills. Most children colour a given shape accurately and paint recognisable pictures, applying paint carefully. When riding wheeled vehicles they show an increasing confidence and ability to ride and steer accurately. Children are given good opportunities to develop their physical skills in class and in the hall but activities in the designated outdoor play area require more structure. The school is aware of this and has plans to extend and develop this area.

Creative development

- 74 The children make good progress in this area of learning. They experience a wide range of techniques in art and most show ability that is in line with and often above that expected. This is the result of good teaching and opportunities to work with a good variety of paints and materials. When creating collages of ducks they choose, cut and stick different materials effectively to produce individual pictures. They mix colours appropriately for their paintings and demonstrate good hand/eye co-ordination when making their own 'Arks'. They show good control when using small brushes to create recognisable self-portraits and when drawing pictures using pencil crayons in their personal story and wordbooks. They regularly sing action songs and rhymes and know a good number from memory. These support learning well in literacy and mathematics, for example when singing 'ten green bottles'. Both classroom environments are very attractively displayed with children's creative work. There are appropriate role play areas for children to recreate and imagine a variety of situations from their lives at home and in the classroom. Work in the creative area impacts well on the development of language, physical and co-operative skills.

ENGLISH

- 75 In the 2001 National Curriculum reading tests for seven-year-olds, standards were high enough to be above the national average and those of similar schools. Pupils did particularly well in writing where standards were well above the national average and those of similar schools. These standards were reflected in the work pupils were doing during the inspection.
- 76 In the 2001 English tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. Whilst the percentage of pupils attaining the national level was similar to the national average, too few pupils attained the higher level. Inspection evidence indicates that the group of pupils who took the tests had entered school with below average attainment. A number of the above average pupils in the group left the school and the pupils replacing them were of mostly average and below average ability. Of the pupils who took the test, 25 were boys and ten were girls. Many of the boys did not do well in writing and this depressed the overall standards. The work pupils were doing during the inspection indicates that standards are similar to the national average and there is no significant difference in the standards attained by boys and girls. There are still some weaknesses in aspects of pupils' writing. In the infants and juniors, there has been a steady improvement in standards since the last inspection.

- 77 By the ages of seven and eleven, standards in speaking and listening are average. Most pupils speak clearly and respond appropriately to what others have to say. They listen well and show respect when others are speaking. In both the infants and juniors, the good relationship between teachers and pupils develops pupils' self-confidence well. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language, know that their contributions will be valued. In general lesson work across all subjects teachers do not, however, provide enough opportunities for pupils to discuss their work in groups, engage in role play, drama and debate. This has a negative effect on pupils' achievements and the average and above average pupils do not make as much progress as they might.
- 78 By the age of seven, standards in reading are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Pupils enjoy their reading and handle books with care and respect. Above average pupils read familiar texts fluently and with good expression and accuracy. They understand the main points of a story and use their knowledge of a contents page and index successfully to locate information in reference books. Pupils of average ability show good levels of confidence and read simple texts with good accuracy. They talk about the main plot and characters in the book they are reading, showing sound understanding of what they have read. Most pupils know what a contents page and index are. Below average pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported effectively and achieve well. Whilst their accuracy and fluency are below average, they are keen to read and use picture clues and their knowledge of letter sounds well to help them read some unfamiliar words.
- 79 By the age of eleven, standards in reading are similar to the national average and pupils' achievements are sound overall. All pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy and average and above average pupils are competent readers of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Above average pupils develop critical appreciation of a range of books. They know, for example, the difference between a biography and an autobiography and pupils in Years 5 and 6 discuss the literary merits of Harry Potter as compared with the Lord of the Rings. Average and above average pupils predict what might happen in a story by referring to elements of the story that they have already read. The below average pupils and those with special educational needs make sound progress and develop their knowledge of letter sounds to split up words into small parts to help them read unfamiliar words. For example, one pupil read the word 'vigorously' by using this method. Most pupils understand the purpose of a contents, index and glossary and are able to retrieve information from non-fiction books successfully. However, the school library is not used enough to develop pupils' library and reference skills and to develop independent research work for the older pupils.
- 80 In writing, all pupils achieve well in the infants and standards in handwriting, spelling and grammar are good. Most pupils form letters correctly and some above average pupils are beginning to write in a neat joined script by Year 2. Spelling is good and most simple words are spelt correctly in pupils' independent writing. Average and above average pupils use full stops and capital letters with increasing accuracy and understand the purpose of speech marks and question marks. For example, an average attaining boy in Year 2 wrote in his story 'Can I have a cup of tea, the tiger said?' Above average pupils write good correctly punctuated factual accounts. For example, one pupil wrote such an account about Guy Fawkes using the computer to edit the text. When writing independently, the writing of the average and above average pupils is often organised, imaginative and clear. The below average pupils and those with special educational needs are given additional support to help them

with their writing and they achieve well. This support takes the form of letter writing guides, worksheets and direct teaching support.

- 81 Most writing skills developed in the infants are built on satisfactorily in the juniors and pupils' achievements are sound. Handwriting, spelling and grammar develop well and all pupils present their work neatly in a consistent joined script. Pupils are proud of their writing and are keen to show it to others. By the age of eleven, the writing of the above average pupils shows good understanding of organisational features of paragraphs and how ideas can be linked. The writing of the average pupils is usually well structured with mostly accurate use of punctuation. Pupils write in a good range of forms including some good poetry, play scripts, reports, book reviews, letters and factual accounts. When looking at personification in poetry an above average pupil in Year 5 wrote about a tree, 'the roots wriggle as they squeeze through the mud. The trunk stands stiff and tall.' Additional support and the arrangement of pupils into sets based on ability enables the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to achieve at least as well as all other pupils since the work given to them is usually matched appropriately to their needs. By the age of eleven, most below average and special educational needs pupils write in a legible joined script and are able to write a piece of text consisting of two or more paragraphs with reasonably accurate punctuation and spelling.
- 82 Whilst pupils develop sound basic skills in writing and have some opportunity to write independently, teachers rely too heavily on the development of formal writing exercises at the expense of creative and extended non-narrative writing. There is, for example, little evidence of extended pieces of writing in history, geography, science and religious education. This leads to some lack of enthusiasm for writing and consequently pupils do not achieve as well as they might. Writing does not have a high enough profile in the school. There are not enough examples of good writing in classrooms to stimulate the pupils.
- 83 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching towards the end of the infants and juniors. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The teaching of basic reading and writing skills is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection. There have, however, been some improvements brought about by the adoption of the literacy hour. In both the infants and juniors, there is a better structure to lessons and planning is better. Lesson plans are securely based on the National Literacy Strategy framework and show clearly what the pupils will learn and how this links to what pupils have done before. This develops learning more progressively across a series of lessons. The setting of pupils by ability from Year 1 onwards has helped teachers provide a closer match of work to the various needs of the pupils. There are separate and well-focused group reading sessions in all year groups that develop pupils' learning effectively. Teachers in the infants link reading and writing activities well and teach letter sounds effectively. Good questioning is a key feature of the more successful lessons and develops pupils' learning well. For example, in a shared reading session in Year 2, the teacher asks, 'where does it tell us what kind of person this character is?' In both the infant and junior literacy sessions, the final discussion session is often rushed and seldom evaluates what has been learnt and what difficulties have been encountered.
- 84 All teachers expect pupils to present their work neatly and pupils respond well to this. The large majority of pupils listen and behave well as a result of the high expectations of the teachers. In all year groups, good use is made of materials and resources

such as Big Books, vocabulary cards, dictionaries and white boards to stimulate learning. However, computers are not used enough to consolidate and extend pupils' literacy skills, particularly in the juniors. Teachers' assessment of individual progress and attainment is satisfactory. All pupils have reading diaries and there are sound systems to track individual progress in other aspects of the subject. There are regular spelling tests and marking of pupils' work. Marking is good and contains comments and individual targets to help pupils develop their work. In the most effective lessons, there is a good written review of the lessons and this is used to plan subsequent work. The effectiveness of these systems in supporting pupils' learning is limited by a lack of consistency across the school. Whilst teachers give sensitive support to pupils with special educational needs, the literacy targets in the IEPs are not built into general lesson planning and so work is not always focused on developing these targets when additional teaching support is not available. This means that the progress of these pupils is not as rapid as it might be at these times. Homework is used satisfactorily to develop learning in the subject. Reading books and spellings are taken home regularly and some work in connection with topics is taken home in the juniors. Parents of children in the juniors do not have the opportunity to comment on the progress their children make with reading homework since reading diaries have no sections where this can be recorded.

- 85 Management of English is satisfactory overall, although there has been insufficient monitoring of teaching over the past two years. The co-ordinator works hard and monitors teachers' plans as well as helping the headteacher and deputy headteacher to undertake regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils' written work. There has been good evaluation of pupils' performance in national tests, including careful analysis of the relative performance of boys and girls. These activities provide valuable information on pupils' learning and have helped to highlight and bring some improvement in shared writing experiences for all pupils and the need for more extended writing in the juniors. The co-ordinator works in the reception class and consequently has too little day-to-day contact with the juniors. Consequently, with no regular monitoring of teaching, it is difficult for her to maintain a clear overview of what is working well and what is not in the teaching of the subject. The lack of such monitoring, for example, has not highlighted weaknesses in the closing review sessions in lessons.

MATHEMATICS

- 86 By the age of seven, standards are similar to the national average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Teachers build securely on the good base provided in the Foundation Stage. Progress is mostly good in the juniors so that by the age of eleven, standards are above the national average. Boys do a little better than the girls, but this is not significantly different to the position nationally. This picture of standards is mirrored in the national tests for 2001. Pupils are taught in ability groups throughout the school and this provides a good match of work to the needs of the different ability groups. Pupils who have special educational needs and English as an additional language also benefit from good support in the sets and their achievements are similar to all other pupils. Teaching engenders positive attitudes and gives most pupils a good level of challenge in most aspects of the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Continued improvement to the curriculum, teaching in ability groups, focused monitoring of teaching and learning, and the careful tracking of pupils' progress have all contributed to the improvements in standards by the age of eleven.

- 87 By the age of seven, most pupils have sound mental mathematics skills. This is because of the opportunities provided by teachers at the beginning of lessons to sharpen the quick recall of number problems. For example, most pupils recognise odd and even numbers quickly and accurately. They count confidently to 100 in steps of 2, 5 and 10 and above average pupils have good understanding of place value to a hundred. Below average pupils work comfortably with numbers to 50, counting in twos and tens. Most pupils are familiar with mathematical operations and mathematical signs and use these to make up number stories using numbers to 100. Above average pupils add tens to a given number accurately. They recognise and use coins to £1 in shopping activities and know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. Above average pupils understand the term right angle and all have had experience in estimating and measuring in centimetres and metres.
- 88 By the age of eleven, most pupils have developed good skills in mental mathematics and the majority work confidently and accurately with large numbers. Most pupils have a secure grasp of place value and of the four number operations. Above average pupils work successfully with numbers up to one million. They confidently complete written calculations, for example, those involving multiplication and division of three-digit numbers by one- and two-digit numbers. Most average and above average pupils understand the link between equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals and the above average pupils use this understanding to solve challenging everyday problems well. Most pupils understand how to calculate perimeter and area. Co-ordinates are used successfully to locate position and rotate shapes. Above average pupils record the co-ordinates in four quadrants and use square and cube roots accurately. Pupils have a sound grasp of common weights and measures and time and understand the meaning of mode and median. Through data handling activities, pupils learn to draw and interpret line, pie and block graphs. The small number of gifted pupils undertake investigations into centres of rotation, volume and the surface area of cylinders and similar quadrilaterals. Most pupils demonstrate good attitudes to their work in mathematics because most teachers make learning interesting and challenging. Pupils work well together especially when working in group activities but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in mathematical investigations.
- 89 Whilst the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school are satisfactory, and on a few occasions good, they could be better. Most teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy. The three-part lesson structure is well established, but the opening and closing sessions are sometimes not as effective as they might be. The opening mental mathematics session, although often delivered briskly and enthusiastically, is frequently too short and sometimes lacks challenge. The plenary or final part is, again, often too short and not always related to the main part of the lesson. In the less successful lessons, pupils are given insufficient opportunities to talk about what they have been learning and the strategies they have used in their work. A good feature of most lessons is the clear sharing of the purpose of lessons with pupils. This raises awareness of what they are expected to learn. Questioning is used soundly to assess what pupils have understood. The main teaching activity is usually explained well, but occasionally it takes too long so that some pupils lose interest. Activities usually involve pupils practising and consolidating their skills. In this part of the lesson, teachers manage pupils effectively and the pace of learning is usually good with pupils working well independently and showing good concentration. Teachers have high expectations, relationships are good and they encourage pupils well. Many activities are usually teacher led and structured using worksheets or textbooks from commercial schemes. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge to real life problems and

extend learning at these times and this puts some limitations on pupils' progress. An exception is the teaching in the small gifted group, where provision is good.

- 90 The majority of teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to develop pupils' mathematical vocabulary well. Planning is uniform and provides good guidance for lesson delivery. Learning support assistants, where available, are used well to support the below average pupils and those who have special educational needs. This ensures that their learning is effective, and they make similar progress to others in the group. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work but there are few useful comments which let pupils know how they can improve and the use of procedures are not consistent across the school. Teachers ensure that mathematics lessons are fully inclusive and all pupils are wholly involved in all mathematical activities.
- 91 Across the school, the pupils' ability to use ICT in lessons to aid and extend their learning is not developed well enough because teachers do not provide enough opportunities. Pupils use their mathematics skills satisfactorily to help learning in other subjects. For example, they are involved in drawing graphs and taking accurate measurements in science, handling data in ICT, using timelines in history, and measuring in design and technology.
- 92 The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and support to colleagues and manages mathematics satisfactorily. However, the role does not involve enough monitoring of teaching. This limits her overview of standards across the school and her knowledge of what is working well and what is not. Thorough training for teachers and support staff has been effective in improving teaching and standards. The good analysis of test results and regular assessments is used well to identify any areas of weakness in pupils' learning. Tracking of pupils' progress is sound and some individual and group targets have been successfully introduced. This is relatively new and needs further development in order to be influential in raising standards. Day-to-day assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not used consistently and this limits their effectiveness.

SCIENCE

- 93 In the 2001 national tests and assessments for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds, standards were above average. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was above average for seven-year-olds and well above average for eleven-year-olds. The school did particularly well to get half of the eleven-year-olds to these higher levels with pupils doing much better than pupils in similar schools. Over the past three years, standards in science have risen significantly and at a more rapid pace than nationally. There is no difference in the standards attained by boys and girls.
- 94 Teachers develop pupils' knowledge of life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes well and this accounts for these good performances. There is evidence of a good range of work across these aspects of science. In addition, pupils in Year 6 especially, are prepared thoroughly for the test situations with a systematic review of their earlier learning. However, the inspection findings, based on a wider range of evidence that includes the scrutiny of pupils' past and present work across all year groups, shows that standards are in line with national averages overall. This is because teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop enquiry and research skills and to apply their good knowledge and understanding in investigative work. Standards in this aspect of science are average. Standards in the infants have improved since the last

inspection when they were below average. Standards have been successfully maintained in the juniors.

- 95 Throughout the school, most pupils make sound progress in their lessons and as a result achieve satisfactorily over time. This includes higher attaining pupils, who are suitably challenged by the work teachers set and who benefit most from the direct and focused knowledge-based teaching. Pupils with special educational needs, for whom teachers usually match tasks appropriately and provide additional support wherever possible, also achieve satisfactorily. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, a lower attaining pupil made satisfactory gains in his knowledge and understanding of liquids and solids working on a suitably amended worksheet and with the helpful support of the classroom assistant.
- 96 In order to raise the levels of achievement further, teachers need to ensure that pupils' knowledge is based on what they themselves have observed, talked about and tested. At present there is limited evidence of pupils organising and carrying out tests in order to develop a better understanding that scientific ideas are based on evidence. As they move through the school they acquire a good bank of increasingly complex scientific vocabulary. In Year 2 they talk confidently about natural and manmade materials. In Year 4 they use the terms newtons, friction and surfaces when recalling their work on forces. Pupils in Year 6 talked knowledgeably about distillation as a purification process. The school has already identified that in order to move forward pupils now need to be encouraged to make better use of this vocabulary when making predictions and when drawing conclusions from a wider range of practical tasks.
- 97 In Year 2, skilful direct teaching leads pupils to a good understanding of naturally occurring materials. They know that some of these materials may be changed by a variety of processes such as spinning to produce wool for a jumper or shaping and polishing wood to make furniture. The teacher's high expectations are clear in the demanding task assigned to higher attaining pupils as they record their work in the form of a flow-chart. In Year 4 the teacher's careful and methodical approach promotes a good awareness of safe working practices. Pupils' responsible attitudes, enthusiasm and very good behaviour make a significant contribution to their learning about forces. In Year 6 their knowledge of materials is extended, building successfully on their earlier learning. Almost all of them are confident in the classification of a variety of materials into solids, liquids and gases. A significant proportion of them know that physical change such as freezing of water alters the arrangements of particles but not the particles themselves.
- 98 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in both the infants and the juniors, although in lessons seen there were some examples of good teaching. This is similar to the situation reported at the time of the last inspection. Significant strengths are teachers' good knowledge of science and, through careful planning, their ability to ensure that pupils' learning builds systematically on their earlier experiences. They are well supported and guided in this through the consistent implementation of a structured curriculum based on recent national guidance. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when the school was criticised for the lack of a scheme of work. Teachers give clear explanations and instructions, as in Year 4 for example, when pupils knew exactly what was expected of them and wasted no time as they quickly settled to their group tasks. They make good use of questioning to challenge and extend pupils' scientific thinking and to check their understanding. In Year 6, this was coupled with good advice and helpful suggestions about how to tackle particular questions. The main shortcoming lies in the teaching of

investigative science. There are too few opportunities provided for the pupils to develop skills of enquiry and investigation.

- 99 Leadership and management in the subject are currently sound but with strong potential for further improvement. The hardworking and knowledgeable co-ordinator has carried out a thorough analysis of pupils' performance in both national and school-based tests. This has helped to identify areas for development such as encouraging pupils to make more use of information and data to draw conclusions. It also highlighted the need to review the teaching of filtration and the separation of simple mixtures in Year 6. Pupils' work is reviewed regularly by the headteacher and deputy headteacher in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and to provide a clear view of standards in the subject. However, there have been insufficient opportunities for the co-ordinator to gain first-hand knowledge of teaching and learning through a regular and systematic programme of monitoring.
- 100 A good system of focused half-termly assessments has been introduced. Key criteria that are firmly rooted in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are used effectively to measure pupils' progress. There is a clear and straightforward format for recording the results that could be usefully developed to inform the setting of individual targets for improvement. These procedures are very recent and their implementation is currently inconsistent. In addition, there has been insufficient time for them to become firmly embedded in the teaching and learning process. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and does not impact enough on the development of pupils' learning in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

- 101 The quality of work seen across the school is at a level expected for the pupils' ages. This is similar to the findings of the previous report. Some work in the juniors, involving sectional observational drawings of fruit and Greek vases and leaves using a Batik technique, is of high quality. Talking to pupils and observing them at work shows that they have good attitudes to their work and enjoy the practical nature of the subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing the knowledge and understanding of the materials and processes used in making different art forms.
- 102 Pupils in Year 1 paint recognisable self-portraits, using colour carefully to achieve skin tones and backgrounds. They make collages of figures carefully on a board, celebrating work in personal and social education. Pupils in Year 2 rotate paint tiles to create block patterns. They make effective collages using 'spring' colours well. This reinforces their investigations of materials in science work. Pupils carefully shade different coloured threads on a card to represent their perceptions of seasons.
- 103 A good variety of techniques are demonstrated across the junior classes. Carefully drawn Mehndi patterns, Hindu Gods and Divali cards support Year 4 work in religious education. Pupils in Year 5 show good awareness of colour and attention to detail when making collage pictures of Greek vases and masks. Pupils in Year 6 create pictures using a cross-stitch technique to effectively represent houses, birds and religious symbols. Cross-section pencil drawings of fruit and watercolour paintings of trees illustrating poetry, are of a high quality and demonstrate good technical drawing skills.
- 104 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good when taught by the co-ordinator in after-school art clubs. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and concentrate on

their work because lessons are well planned and interesting for them. Teachers use resources effectively to develop skills and techniques across a range of artistic activities. There is a high expectation of behaviour and pupils are encouraged to work carefully with useful evaluative criticism given to further develop skills. This was particularly evident in an effective lesson on observational drawing in Year 6. Pupils used pastels well to test different ways of using them to change line and colour tone. Not enough use is made of ICT to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and design.

- 105 Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The art curriculum is interesting for the pupils and the co-ordinator has worked hard to maintain standards across the school. Masks produced by the art club and on display in the entrance hall are of a very high quality. Work in three dimensions, however, is under represented throughout the school. Display work throughout the school is satisfactory, but rarely features drapes, objects and artefacts.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 106 During the inspection little teaching of the subject was taking place and only one lesson was seen. Therefore, judgements have been based also upon discussions with teachers and pupils, teachers' plans and other documents and a limited number of work samples provided by the school. These show that standards are not high enough. They are below the levels normally expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils do not have the opportunities to work with a wide enough variety of materials, tools and techniques and therefore their range of skills and knowledge is not being sufficiently developed. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls.
- 107 At the time of the last inspection, standards in the infants were judged to be in line with expected levels while there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in the juniors. It is evident that, apart from the adoption of national guidance to support teachers' planning, and the very recent appointment of a co-ordinator, little has been done since the last inspection to develop the school's provision for the subject. The rate of improvement therefore has been unsatisfactory. However, the newly appointed co-ordinator is knowledgeable and well qualified and is quickly developing an understanding of her role in raising standards.
- 108 In discussion with infant and junior pupils, they are unclear about the precise nature of design and technology as a subject. They are unsure about what they have learned and how their skills and knowledge have improved. This is largely because teachers do not give sufficient attention to the systematic and balanced development of the essential skills of the subject that distinguish it from others. As a result, for example, the quality of pupils' designs shows little progression from one year to the next. Also, there is little evidence of pupils meeting increasingly more challenging or difficult situations as they move through the school. Teachers' expectations of pupils' designs were of a similar level for their puppets in Year 2 and their masks in Year 5 - simple labelled sketches accompanied by lists of materials. Older pupils' experience of basic techniques is inadequate and most, for example, were unable to make practical suggestions about joining a variety of materials. From a younger age, pupils are not working with a wide enough range of materials. There are not enough opportunities for the pupils to learn different methods of cutting, jointing or fixing to prepare them for the more complex work that is necessary to meet expected levels in Year 6.

- 109 In Year 1 there were no examples of pupils' earlier work available for scrutiny. In Year 2, as part of a series of lessons, pupils looked at finger, glove and string puppets. They used knowledge gained in the current science study to identify materials such as felt, fur and wood and based their designs on the samples provided by the teacher.
- 110 In Years 3 and 4, pupils made satisfactory Christmas cards using levers and linkages to create moving parts. Teachers' plans show a clearer understanding of the key elements of design and technology but their learning objectives are not specific enough to ensure sharply focused teaching and learning. Pupils in Year 5 made attractive masks arising from their study of Ancient Greece. These show a good match with their original sketches. However, these tasks in themselves do not allow for the necessary development of the essential subject specific skills of design and technology. For example, there was little evidence of pupils being encouraged to evaluate their work and to make modifications as their work proceeded in order to improve the finished product.
- 111 In Year 6, pupils' work provides opportunities to use a computer to control a model. Talking to pupils shows that there is a greater emphasis on making than designing. They follow instructions well to build vehicles from a construction kit and gain experience of the use of sensors, making a valuable contribution to their learning in ICT. Pupils have few opportunities to generate their own designs or to work with a variety of tools and equipment.
- 112 In the lesson seen in Year 2, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Strengths included examining three sample puppets and careful questioning to explore the use of puppets, for example who they might be made for and how they might be used. The review phase of the lesson included helpful suggestions about ways in which pupils might improve their work and helpful prompts to extend their thinking. However, during the group tasks, strategies to ensure that pupils remained on task were not always successful, and the pace of learning slipped.
- 113 Design and technology has not been seen as a priority for a considerable time and there have been no opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning. Although national guidance has been adopted to support teachers' planning, it is not yet being implemented consistently in all classes. Each of these factors helps to explain why the school has not yet formed a clear enough view of standards or of the specific nature of the weaknesses in provision. The range of tools and materials available is unsatisfactory and there are insufficient construction kits to support the design process. ICT is not yet being used enough to support and enhance pupils' design skills.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

- 114 Standards in both subjects are similar to those expected for pupils at ages seven and eleven. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and the achievements of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory in geography and mostly good in history.
- 115 In geography, by the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of changes in the weather and the seasons. Pupils in Year 1 study the local area and make good use of large-scale maps to identify geographical features of interest. This develops their early mapping skills effectively. They describe how they would get to various shops in the area and use an appropriate geographical vocabulary in their descriptions. They know the difference between a town and a village and a stream

and a river. Pupils in Year 2 compare and contrast Gunthorpe with the Isle of Struay by listing different means of transportation, employment and the physical features, for example cliffs compared with flat land. When looking at their local environment, they express preferences and compare human and physical features successfully. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 extend early mapping work by looking in greater detail at the local area and its geographical features. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils talk about elements that would be beneficial to a community. They use their own ideas well when suggesting ways to improve the school grounds and have some imaginative suggestions when designing a future playground.

- 116 In history, by the age of seven, pupils develop a sound understanding of aspects of the past. They place objects and events in order as when studying the life and times of Florence Nightingale. Pupils in Year 1 study types of houses and list them correctly into 'old' and 'new', along with associated household items. This develops their understanding of change over time well. Teachers good use of time lines and studying famous people from the past and present gives pupils an increasing sense of chronology and how people acted, lived and dressed in different periods. Work by pupils in Year 6 on the 'life and times of John Lennon' gives them a good understanding of more recent changes. When studying World War Two, pupils show good empathy with situations from the past. One pupil, for example, suggested that 'bombing would have made their spirits low'. Most pupils are developing good knowledge of the reasons for the war, early events and the outcome.
- 117 On the evidence of the lesson seen, a scrutiny of pupils' work and current planning, teaching and learning in both geography and history are satisfactory overall in geography and often good in history. Teachers have a secure knowledge in both subjects and make good use of resources that stimulate learning and interest. The use of computers across both subjects is unsatisfactory and this is an area the school has identified for improvement. Pupils' progress is assessed after units of work, for example mapping skills in geography and knowledge in history. Opportunities for individual research are not consistent in both subjects and this puts some limitations on extending pupils' understanding in the subjects. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not consistently used to develop learning in the subjects. They provide a sound base for reporting to parents and to inform the secondary school upon transfer.
- 118 The leadership and management of both subjects are satisfactory. Sound schemes of work have been developed which provide secure progression of knowledge and key skills from year to year. Help is given with teachers' planning in both subjects. However, there has been no opportunity for the monitoring of teaching, which makes it difficult to identify what works well and what does not in the teaching of the subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 119 By the age of seven, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now broadly in line with national expectations. By the age of eleven, standards are below the level expected nationally. This appears to be worse than at the time of the last inspection. The National Curriculum requirements, however, are now far more demanding for pupils of this age. Changes in staff, a lack of teachers' expertise knowledge and understanding, and insufficient computers in the past have meant that pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to develop necessary skills. However, with improved staff knowledge and training, clear curriculum guidance and improved resources, there is now the potential to raise standards further.

- 120 Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory and most issues have been addressed. Standards have improved in the infants and opportunities have been provided for staff training. Planning is much improved and the quality and quantity of resources is much better. However, there is very little use of ICT to support learning in other subjects and this is an area identified by the school for development. There is no Internet policy and this needs to be addressed as soon as possible.
- 121 By the age of seven, pupils have sound skills in the use of ICT, although their understanding of the benefits and use of ICT both in and out of the classroom is unsatisfactory. Most pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, have a sound knowledge of the keyboard and their achievements in acquiring basic computer skills is satisfactory. Most pupils switch on the computer correctly and access the correct programs. They control the mouse to move text around the screen correctly and print out their work independently. They program a toy to move forwards and backwards accurately and are developing an understanding of how to make it turn. Above average pupils control and direct the movements of a turtle across the screen. Pupils enjoy computer activities and most show good concentration and perseverance. They work agreeably in pairs, use the equipment carefully, take turns and support each other well. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls.
- 122 By the age of eleven, standards are below that expected, particularly in the skills of data handling, multi-media presentations, monitoring, use of the Internet and sending and receiving e-mails. This is because they have not had the breadth of experience in the past in these areas. Most pupils load up the computers successfully, retrieve, amend, print and save their work. Behaviour and attitudes to their work are good and pupils show respect for the equipment. They edit their writing of poems using a range of fonts, sizes, and colours using the alignment key effectively. They know how to illustrate their writing by retrieving pictures from clip art collections, but generally have not used the computer sufficiently in developing artwork and music. They talk enthusiastically about their most recent work, using control technology to move models. Pupils have a limited understanding of the use of ICT in the world beyond school and the comparison of ICT with alternative methods of communication. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Throughout the school, pupils identified as having special educational needs, and the small number with English as an additional language, receive sound support in the subject and make progress on a par with the other pupils.
- 123 In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers have high expectations and demonstrate sound subject knowledge. This enables them to develop the correct vocabulary and teach basic skills effectively. Where teaching is less effective, particularly in the junior classes, the pace of the introduction is sometimes too slow and this means pupils become restless because they are keen to get to work. The above average pupils are not sufficiently challenged in these lessons. Questioning is often used effectively to assess pupils' understanding and move learning forward. Most planning, based on national guidance, provides a sound structure to lessons. Most lessons are too teacher directed and this does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to think for themselves, develop independence or use their initiative.
- 124 The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. He has good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards. He supports teachers with their planning and gives guidance on how activities might be developed. However, he has no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and

learning across the school or share good practice. Since he teaches in an infant class, this clouds his overview of how the subject is taught, particularly in the juniors. Sound assessment procedures have recently been introduced but have not yet had time to impact on standards. There are no examples of pupils' work matched against National Curriculum levels to aid teachers in making more accurate assessments of pupils' needs.

- 125 The school is well equipped in the computer room with twelve modern computers, scanner, and Internet access. However, the school is still experiencing problems with some computers and during the inspection, six were not working. The room is used well in the afternoon but is not used enough during the morning sessions. This places some limitations on its effectiveness in developing pupils' learning. Computers have very recently been introduced in all classrooms but are not used enough in the development of pupils' learning across all subjects. There are currently no printers attached and this reduces their usefulness. Other ICT resources, such as calculators, tape recorders, CD players, keyboards and television and video recorders are adequate. Their use, however, is not linked to improving pupils' knowledge and understanding of the use and benefits of ICT.

MUSIC

- 126 Throughout the school, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' ages and pupils' achievements are sound. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection. Standards have been maintained despite the lack of a subject co-ordinator. The visiting specialist teacher makes a significant contribution to music throughout the school with support, advice and good teaching across the school.
- 127 Pupils in both the infants and juniors sing well and with enthusiasm. They enjoy their music making, have good attitudes and work well when co-operating as part of a group. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in music by non-teaching assistants and achieve well. By the age of seven, pupils have a good sense of rhythm and maintain a beat successfully when clapping. They keep in tune when singing in lessons and assemblies and know a number of hymns and songs from memory. In Year 2 lessons, pupils know a good range of tuned and untuned instruments and sort them into groups by method of play. They recognise that selected instruments make a range of sound that creates different moods and effects. They link their learning effectively to their science work on sounds, reflecting that increased air movements and force of striking and playing affects volume and outcomes.
- 128 Pupils in Year 3 identify how music can be used descriptively and experiment with a range of songs representing animal characteristics. For example, words from 'Gee up Neddie' enable all pupils to learn that the rhythm matches a horse trotting. They comment upon their work and seek to improve their performance satisfactorily. In a lesson linked well to their World War Two history topic, pupils in Year 5 make up their own songs about the 'Quartermaster's stores'. They learn about the types of songs used to raise morale and use ration card items in the rhymes. Pupils in Year 6 take it in turns to work with the visiting specialist teacher on keyboard compositions. They learn to recognise and play four bar rhythms, identify changes and create and improve their own tunes using a variety of keyboard features and effects successfully.
- 129 Teaching overall is satisfactory with some good features. It is very good when taken by the visiting specialist teacher. Good features of the lessons seen were the enthusiastic manner of teachers, good class and group management, good pace to

lessons, use of appropriate resources and the positive response of pupils to their music making. In the lessons where the teaching is less successful, the pace is not quick enough and some pupils begin to lose interest. Computers are not used enough to develop pupils' learning in the subject.

- 130 All pupils in the juniors have the opportunity to join the choir and learn the recorder. Pupils benefit from opportunities to perform in assemblies and when celebrating festivals such as Christmas.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 131 Standards are similar to those expected for seven- and eleven-year-olds. Standards in gymnastics are good by the age of eleven. All pupils in Year 6 who left school in July 2001 were able to swim 25 metres unaided, as required by the National Curriculum. The overall standard of work seen is much the same as that found at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons across the school with good achievement in gymnastics. There is no difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
- 132 Issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed. Lesson planning, for example, is now satisfactory and consistent across the school. There has been an improvement in resources and satisfactory assessment procedures have been introduced. There have been some observations of teaching, though this has not been sufficiently regular or focused enough on improvement and the sharing of good practice.
- 133 By the age of seven, most pupils move around the hall showing sound control of a ball with hand, foot and bat. They show a developing awareness of space and work enthusiastically. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow the clear instructions promptly. They are beginning to evaluate their own performance and the performance of others. Behaviour is good because of the good relationships that have been developed and high teacher expectations. Most pupils have a sound awareness of the effect that exercise has on the body. They put effort into their activities and are aware of safety issues. Pupils in Year 1 enjoy their dance lessons and listen carefully to the tape. They respond satisfactorily to instructions and the music, altering the rhythm, speed and direction of their movements well. All pupils are appropriately dressed for physical activity.
- 134 By the age of eleven, pupils talk about the effect of exercise on their bodies and are aware of its value to health and fitness. In gymnastics, they make up good sequences of movement, both on the floor and apparatus, showing precision, control and fluency. They incorporate variations in speed, level and direction. They are encouraged to critically evaluate their performance and that of others and look for ways in which they can improve. Apparatus is quickly and safely erected, with pupils working very well in teams. They clearly understand safety issues and the need for safe movement about the hall when using apparatus. In games activities, pupils co-operate well, showing precision, control and fluency in their play. Behaviour is usually good because they are keen and interested and lessons proceed at a good pace.
- 135 The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although some good teaching was observed in Year 2 and Year 6, including a high quality gymnastics lesson for the older juniors. The teaching in these lessons was effective because of the teachers' good subject knowledge and clear focus on what they wanted the pupils to learn. Lesson plans are variable but generally satisfactory. Most teachers share

the purpose of the lesson with the pupils and this raises their awareness. Lessons usually begin with a suitable warm-up activity but the cool down at the end of lessons is less well developed. It is frequently too short. Good clear instructions are given and most teachers have high expectations so that pupils know what they must do. In a Year 6 games lesson, pupils were supported in improving their techniques in throwing and catching a ball through evaluating good examples selected by the teacher. The coaching points made by the teacher throughout the lesson also helped pupils to progress well. In satisfactory lessons, there are missed opportunities for the development of skills through demonstration and evaluation, although the selected activities are appropriate. Relationships are good and lessons proceed at a brisk pace.

- 136 Teachers' planning shows that there is sound coverage of the National Curriculum requirements for the subject with each class having at least two lessons each week. New subject planning, based on national guidance, ensures that skills and knowledge are built progressively as pupils move through the school. A sound range of extra-curricular activities enhances the provision made in lessons and includes games fixtures against other schools for older pupils. The school takes good advantage of opportunities provided by outside agencies, for example for football and hockey coaching. Parent volunteers make a good contribution to the subject by providing transport and support for inter-school activities such as football, netball and cricket.
- 137 The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides satisfactory support to colleagues. There is, however, insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning and consequently no firm overview of what works well and what does not. Sound assessment procedures for physical education have recently been introduced to monitor pupils' progress and identify gifted pupils. Once identified, any such pupils are encouraged to develop their talents, for example through external football coaching. The school makes effective use of the on-site learner swimming pool during the summer months. Older pupils make good use of the local secondary school pool for deep-water swimming and survival and water skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 138 At the ages of seven and eleven, standards are below those expected by the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. At the time of the last inspection they were in line with expected levels and have therefore declined. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. Although lessons were seen in several of the junior classes, no teaching of religious education took place in the infants during the inspection. However, the inspection evidence also includes discussions with pupils and teachers, teachers' plans and the scrutiny of pupils' past work. The scrutiny of pupils' past work in both the infants and the juniors revealed little written evidence. Teachers, therefore, are missing valuable opportunities to develop pupils' extended writing skills.
- 139 In the infants, pupils learn about Christianity and Judaism and begin to develop sound understanding that for many people religion is an important aspect of their lives. Pupils in Year 2 know that the Torah scroll teaches Jewish people how to live their lives, and start to think about what guides them on how they should live. They explore themes such as belonging and celebrating, relating the latter to Christmas and the Hindu festival of Divali. In Years 3 and 4, they extend their knowledge of Hinduism and the importance of worship and begin to consider the religions that are represented in the neighbourhood. In Years 5 and 6, close links are established with the programme of personal, social and health education but with too little regard for the requirements

of the locally agreed syllabus. The main weaknesses throughout the school are pupils' ability to talk about what they have learned using specialist vocabulary and the limited opportunities provided for them to respond in a variety of ways including words, music, movement, art and drama in order to reinforce and deepen their understanding. Both reflect the lack of in-depth coverage of the subject.

- 140 In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall. Three of the lessons were in Years 3 and 4, where teachers plan co-operatively. In one of them, there was skilful teaching of religious education. In the others the lack of a specific subject based learning objective meant that the focus was more to do with the task of constructing a questionnaire and a directory than with religious education. In the most successful lesson, the teacher made good use of pupils' own religious experiences. She valued the contributions of all pupils and they listened respectfully to each other's comments. One of the other lessons highlighted a weakness in the planning arrangements. Tasks that were well within the capabilities of the Year 4 classes proved to be too difficult for most of the pupils in Year 3.
- 141 Both leadership and management of religious education are unsatisfactory. There have been several co-ordinators in recent years, and at present there is no one who is responsible for the subject, or has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. Recent national guidance has been adopted to support teachers' planning but its implementation is not being monitored to ensure that it is used consistently in all classes. Religious education has been a neglected area of the curriculum for some time. Resources are inadequate to enable the allocated study units to be taught effectively. Insufficient use is made of the local community to support pupils' learning. Weaknesses in the subject have a detrimental effect on pupils' spiritual development.