

INSPECTION REPORT

LINCOLN MONKS ABBEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120429

Headteacher: Mrs L. Abbott

Reporting inspector: Mrs G. Crew
22837

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th July 2002

Inspection number: 194617

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Monks Road
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Lincolnshire.

Postcode: LN2 5PF

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M. McGill

Date of previous inspection: 6th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22837	Mrs G. Crew	Registered inspector	Foundation stage Art Religious education	How well is the school led and managed? How well are the pupils taught?
19567	Mrs M. Malin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16198	Mrs C. Etherington	Team inspector	English History	How well does the school care for its pupils?
32097	Mrs J. Clement	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Information and communication technology Music Physical education	
22178	Mrs K. Robertson	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Design and technology	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
23397	Mrs I. Bradbury	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Monks Abbey is larger than other primary schools. Fifty-two children, aged from three, attend the nursery on a part-time basis. There are 366 full-time pupils aged four to eleven. However, the number is declining due to local circumstances. The school is in a regeneration zone and serves two distinct areas within the local community where there is a wide range of accommodation. Significant numbers of pupils leave or join the school during the year. This affects pupils' achievement and standards at the end of a year. Attainment on entry to the nursery is generally very low. Many children have significant delay in speech and language. Twenty three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. However, as the school does not offer hot meals this figure is not an accurate representation. The majority of pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds. There are three per cent of pupils for whom English is an additional language, which is higher than most schools. Thirty one per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs. This is above the national average. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational need. There are no pupils currently assessed as gifted or talented.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. Standards pupils attain at the end of Year 6 are improving and are generally in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Achievement, from starting school, is good. The contribution of the headteacher in leading the school forward is very good. Management is good overall. The work of the central management team, which includes the deputy and assistant headteachers, generally supports this with the exception of the contribution of the deputy headteacher. Pupils' personal development is very good and the key to their achievement. Each pupil is supported to do as well as they can and their contributions are valued. This underlies the school's thoughtful, caring ethos. All staff are very hard working and mostly use their skills to best effect. The school is constantly seeking to improve standards further. Good value for money is provided.

What the school does well

- The vision for school development is led by the headteacher very well. The governing body supports this through a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Consistently excellent teaching contributes to exemplary provision in the nursery. A very good foundation for future learning, led by the assistant headteacher, is provided for children in nursery and reception classes.
- Over a quarter of pupils at the school have special educational needs and provision for them is very good. The attention given to the care and well being of all pupils is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. This reflects the aims and values of the school. Very good social and moral development supports this.
- The partnership created with parents is very good, as are their views of the school.

What could be improved

- The contribution of the deputy headteacher to leadership and management.
- The use of data about what pupils know, understand and can do in order to raise standards in all subjects.

Other areas for development noted by the inspectors are already in the school development plan.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Following the inspection in May 1997 the school had a significant number of key issues to address with serious weaknesses in financial planning and control, development planning, monitoring and evaluation of curriculum provision and the use of assessment. Further areas requiring improvement were also identified in the report and by the headteacher when she took up her post in the following September. The school has addressed most of the issues successfully and continues to place priority on those linked to improving attainment. Schemes of work have been established to ensure that pupils' experiences are systematically built on. Roles and responsibilities of senior managers and subject managers are clearly defined and include monitoring how well the school is doing. However, further contribution to this is required by the deputy headteacher. Procedures for assessment and recording have been developed. Results are used to inform planning, which has also improved. Financial systems and procedures are now effective. The school day has been restructured and all statutory requirements are met. Standards have improved, particularly in Key Stage 1. In addition, the school has developed initiatives required of it locally and nationally. Further targets to help improve the quality of education have been appropriately prioritised in refined development planning. All areas of the school's work have been enhanced and improvement since the last inspection has been 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	E	D	E	D
Mathematics	D	B	D	C
Science	E	E	E	D

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

During the inspection, children in the Foundation Stage were working at the levels expected of them overall. In personal development, standards were above expectations. Assessments at the end of reception year show the majority of children achieve levels appropriate for this age group. The year 2001 tests and assessments for pupils aged seven show they attained the expected standard in reading and above the expected standard in writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. In comparison to similar schools, based on free school meals, standards were above expected levels in reading and well above in writing and mathematics. The trend shows improvement in standards. Results for pupils aged eleven have shown steady improvement, particularly in mathematics. In 2001 a high proportion of pupils were identified as having special educational needs. A significant number joined the school part way through Key Stage 2. These factors have an impact on the end of year results. Standards were well below the expected level in English when compared nationally, below in mathematics and well below in science. When compared to similar schools, standards were below expected levels in English, at the expected level in mathematics and below in science. The trend in the school's results over the last five years has been above the national trend and the school has met targets agreed with the governors and the Local Education Authority. The results of the 2002 tests and assessments show continued

improvement and more pupils are achieving higher levels of attainment. Work seen in English, mathematics and science was at the expected standard. Standards in art and design were above the expected levels. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils are very eager to learn and keen to succeed. They are enthusiastic learners and are interested in work that is presented to them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	As a result of very good procedures, which are consistently applied, behaviour is very good. Pupils show respect for each other, for adults and the school. They are friendly, kind and understanding.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; the promotion of this area is fundamental to all the school does.
Attendance	Satisfactory; pupils enjoy coming to school.

Pupils have a confident approach to their work, which has a positive impact on the standards achieved. They work well independently and are also good at working together. Pupils are attentive, thoughtful, hard working and willing to 'have a go'.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was good, with a relevant focus on teaching basic skills. Excellent teaching was observed in nine lessons. This included consistently outstanding teaching in the nursery due to a deep-rooted understanding of how young children learn. One poor lesson was seen in Year 4. The lesson had no focus and information given to pupils muddled them rather than extending learning. In reception and Key Stage 1, pupils learn effectively because teachers plan a wide range of practical experiences that stimulate curiosity, enrich experiences and promote talk. In the majority of lessons in Key Stage 2, expectations of pupils were generally good and they were given time to explore their interests and ideas fully. However, some satisfactory lessons did not sufficiently challenge pupils. When teaching was very good, pupils were highly motivated and achieved very well. Teachers used open-ended questions to very good effect to encourage pupils to think more deeply. Teachers' planning shows how they provide for individual or groups of children and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. There are many opportunities for pupils of different or similar abilities to work together.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of learning opportunities is provided especially outside formal lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language	Very good; pupils requiring support are identified early. Tasks are tailored to pupils' particular learning needs and individual support is given when appropriate.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; pupils are encouraged to reflect sensitively on issues that affect their lives and the lives of others. A strong feature of the programme is developing each child individually through raising confidence and self-esteem. Cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; adults show great care for pupils and related procedures are very good. Academic and personal progress is monitored well. There is scope to use assessment data to improve this further.

The curriculum is developed through a range of exciting first-hand experiences relevant to pupils' needs. Pupils flourish within the very thoughtful and caring learning environment provided by the school. This provides a firm foundation for the next stage of their education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has established clear educational direction for the school. Management is good. The majority of staff with responsibility work well together as a team. The contribution of the deputy headteacher is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors work effectively and act as a critical friend. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which is very ably led by the chair of governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school evaluates its performance clearly and accurately. Performance data is analysed well to identify areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Good; resources, both human and physical, are used carefully and always with the aim that their use will influence learning opportunities.

The school has an ethos rooted in a commitment that all pupils will do their personal best. The accommodation, resources and displays are used very effectively to provide an interesting learning environment. Principles of best value are used well to ensure cost effectiveness, except in evaluating the contribution of the deputy headteacher.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school and are helped to be mature and responsible.• Children are expected to work hard and they make good progress.• Parents are comfortable about approaching the school and feel well informed about how well the children are doing.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons.• Some parents feel the school could work more closely with them.• The amount of homework.

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive comments. Inspection findings show that the school works very closely with parents and they are given very good information about pupils' progress. Pupils are provided with the right amount of homework, which increases progressively. The range of activities outside of lessons is good. There are extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school and a very wide range of first-hand experiences, including visits and visitors, are provided for pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the time that children leave the nursery and move into reception classes they are in line to achieve the levels expected of them in speaking and listening, reading, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Attainment is above the expected level in personal and social development, but below the expected level in writing and physical development. At the end of the reception year the majority of children are working at levels expected of them and meet the Early Learning Goals (the recommended target for children at the end of the Foundation Stage) in:

- communication, language and literacy;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- creative development;
- physical development.

2. Personal, emotional and social development continues to improve and is above the expected level. Assessments at the end of reception year indicate that children make above-average progress from the time they start school.

3. Following a dip for two consecutive years, the average 2001 National Curriculum test results for pupils aged seven show improvement, other than in science which is well below expected levels. Results for pupils aged eleven have also shown steady improvement, particularly in mathematics. In Key Stage 2 in particular, it is a common pattern for a high proportion of pupils taking the tests and assessments to have special educational needs. In addition, a significant number of pupils join the school part-way through their schooling. This has affected the Key Stage 2 results for a number of years.

4. The overall trend in attainment shows an improvement in standards. It has been above the national trend. This is supported by the data available from tests and assessments in 2002, although the national and similar school comparisons were not available at the time of the inspection. In addition, the school met the targets agreed with the governors and the Local Education Authority. This is due to:

- good quality teaching and learning;
- activities that are carefully matched to pupils' individual needs;
- individual target setting for literacy and numeracy;
- recognition of the need to refine activities to meet the needs of both less able and more able pupils;
- very good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- regular use of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

5. At the last inspection, pupils made satisfactory progress. From the low starting point, this is now good because

- good attention is given to developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding through first-hand experiences whenever possible;
- there are good links between subjects;
- subjects are planned so that pupils build on what they knew before, except in science where there is repetition;
- pupils are encouraged to use literacy and numeracy to help their learning in other subjects;

- pupils with special educational needs have very good programmes of work and they receive individual support from all adults, but especially from the special needs support assistants and specialist teachers;
- staff generally plan activities to extend learning for more able pupils and are very skilful at pitching questions that encourage them to use their skills in more complex ways and develop their knowledge and understanding;
- good marking helps pupils know what they need to do, and contributes to raising standards;
- all pupils are taught in mixed ability classes;
- consideration is given to balancing the numbers of boys and girls when making up classes and groups;
- assessment results are used to match provision to pupils' needs. This is an improvement from the last inspection when there were serious weaknesses in planning work to match individual needs. However, this could be used more precisely to target what the pupils could achieve at a given stage.

6. When pupils do not make such good progress it is attributed to:

- breaks in schooling;
- pupils changing schools; often to join the school in Key Stage 2;
- special educational needs which are not identified until pupils join the school.

7. The school has established a 'mobility' policy. They acknowledge that pupils may find moving to a new school very unsettling and that this has an adverse affect on achievement. The policy aims to help the pupils settle quickly so that they continue to learn. Parents say that this is effective and pupils do well because they are valued.

8. During the inspection, standards of work seen were in line with those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven in:

- English: although writing is not yet as well developed as reading;
- mathematics: standards have particularly improved in mental recall and number skills, as this has been a school focus;
- science: although over time, pupils are not developing their skills progressively due to fragmented curriculum planning. This is impacting on standards in national tests and assessments;
- design and technology: because pupils develop design and making skills well;
- information and communication technology: because improved resources and more knowledgeable teaching has allowed pupils to develop skills to higher levels;
- history: because the teachers use first-hand experiences whenever possible and allow pupils to do research;
- geography: although a greater emphasis could be placed on using literacy skills to record knowledge and understanding;
- music: the use of activities outside lessons contributes to standards attained and more able pupils are given opportunities to extend their learning;
- physical education: because due emphasis is given to all aspects of the curriculum and activities outside lessons support learning;
- religious education: because the profile of the subject has been raised and time allocated to teaching knowledge and skills has improved standards.

9. Standards of art and design were above the expected level across the school largely due to the whole school policy for promoting pupils' attainment in art as a way to raise self-esteem. The exception to this was three-dimensional work. In this area pupils attain the levels expected of them at seven and eleven.

10. The staff recognise standards need to improve further, particularly in science at Key Stage 1 and English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2. The strategic aims for school development provide direction for achieving this. However, all staff need to use available data more efficiently to predict levels pupils could achieve and to set targets for getting there. All senior managers of the school need to have a clear focus on how this will contribute to raising standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Inspection findings show that the standards identified in the previous inspection have greatly improved and are now very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school: all the parents who returned the parents' questionnaires and who were spoken to by inspectors confirm this. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, value and respect each other and behave well at all times. Pupils are very proud of their achievements and are very keen to show adults their work and have it displayed. They talk enthusiastically about the school and the staff. Many pupils stated when asked, "This is a great school. We do lots of good things here and the teachers are really nice."

12. Pupils are given a range of responsibilities within the school and within each class, which they carry out with pride. Boys and girls in each year group are responsible monitors for particular jobs. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 listen to reception children read and some put lovely comments in the younger pupils' reading books such as, "Well read, can't wait until I listen to you again." They also partner younger classes in activities such as a 'maths trail', when they help the younger pupils with their problems while trying to solve their own, or on a fun note, participating in an Easter egg trail. Years 5 and 6 join in the 'Bully Watch' scheme and are available at break times, should any younger pupils have any problems. Even the youngest are given the opportunity to be a 'buddy' when a new person comes into their class. Whilst opportunities are given for pupils to take responsibility in whole school matters, opportunities for independence, such as planning and carrying out activities themselves, are more limited as pupils move through the school. In the best lessons, pupils can choose to move freely between their desks, the book corner and the computer to further research their topic. At other times, pupils are over-directed and do not have the opportunity to do research or solve problems for themselves.

13. Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in class and around the school. This has a very positive effect on their learning and personal development, as they are generally calm and the majority concentrate very well. The inspection team did not witness any bad behaviour during the inspection, although where teaching is weaker or lessons are too long, pupils' concentration lapses and they start to fidget. Pupils understand the school rules, which are displayed throughout the school and they have a very clear sense of right and wrong. They are confident and show care and concern for each other's feelings and help each other in lessons. Pupils of all ages handle learning resources with care, for example when using books and computers. Pupils are proud of their school and of themselves as members of the community.

14. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good overall. Pupils approach staff with confidence, and they respond warmly and thoughtfully. There are very good relationships between girls and boys and between pupils of different ages, abilities and ethnic groups, all of which contribute to the positive atmosphere of the school. Playtimes are happy times with no evidence of bullying, or oppressive behaviour. Particular subjects, such as religious education and history, and the schools emphasis on encouraging pupils to listen carefully to one another, help them to consider the values and beliefs of others which contributes very well to their overall personal development.

15. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has a number of pupils who are poor attendees and this does affect their performance. Registers are marked morning and afternoon and comply with statutory regulations.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has been improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Satisfactory or better teaching was seen in 99 per cent of lessons. One lesson of poor quality was observed in lower Key Stage 2. Good or better teaching took place in 70 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 43 per cent.

17. While teaching and learning was good overall, it was variable across the school. However, consistency of teaching has improved since the last inspection and this is linked to good improvement in planning. Planning is now carried out in teams, so that pupils in the same year group but different classes have the same experiences. Plans now contain detailed objectives so that it should be clear what the pupils are going to learn and how. Assessment of what pupils' know is now used more effectively to plan tasks for pupils of differing ability and to build on previous work therefore developing their knowledge and skills. Planning is working very well in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2. Evidence shows that in the Years 3 and 4 team, led by the deputy headteacher, there is a lack of consistency. Planning arrangements in this team are unsatisfactory. Pupils in one Year 4 class have different experiences to those in the other. This is because the team leader has not always understood what should be taught or planned tasks that help pupils to learn effectively. As a result, pupils in parallel classes do not always achieve as well as each other.

18. During the inspection nine excellent lessons were observed. Seven of these were in the Foundation Stage, including consistently outstanding teaching in the nursery. Excellent teaching is reflected in the children's achievement and the key factor that leads to them learning very well is the consistency of approach and routines. The overall very good quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children have a very good start to their education and learn skills that secure a firm foundation for future learning in Key Stage 1. All members of staff observed teaching in an exemplary way had a very good understanding of how young children develop and learn. This contributes to the very good quality of learning.

19. In Key Stage 1, teaching was good overall. The proportion of good or better teaching was most frequent in Year 2 where two excellent lessons were seen. Good teaching in Key Stage 1 ensures pupils systematically develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Due to the very good and better teaching in this key stage, pupils are prepared for the test and assessments at the end of Year 2 and standards are improving.

20. While the overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 was good, the proportion of good or better teaching was lower than in the other key stages. A higher percentage of satisfactory teaching was seen in Year 3 and 4. In addition, the quality of teaching in Year 4 varied considerably from one class to the other and included poor teaching. The strength of teaching in this key stage was in one Year 4 class and in Years 5 and 6.

21. Across the school, the key to very good learning, and that pupils learn with both enjoyment and challenge, was the range of interesting activities that were planned by teachers. In most lessons, the learning experiences provided were relevant and allowed the pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. In successful lessons, where there was good or better teaching, pupils were also given a wide range of opportunities that allow them to 'take risks', and learn through their own mistakes, and first-hand experiences.

This was handled with sensitivity and care and adults were very conscious that every attention was given to developing pupils' self esteem.

22. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Adults use a range of teaching strategies and, whenever possible, they encourage the use of literacy and numeracy skills in lessons other than those designated for English or mathematics. In most lessons, teachers provide opportunities to interest, support and develop pupils. This helps them to be involved, to concentrate and learn effectively. However, the opportunities for pupils to initiate their own ideas and to be independent learners become more limited as they move through the school.

23. In the majority of lessons staff give clear explanations and give assistance or advice when this is needed. This helps to extend pupils' thinking and keep them motivated. Very good quality and use of questions is fundamental to this. For example in an excellent lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher asked the question, "How do we divide these numbers?" This allowed the pupils to use the knowledge they already had to answer at their own particular level of understanding. A less able child said, "By making groups." while a more able child answered, "You use the five's multiplication table". However, when teaching in Year 4 was poor or there were weaker elements within satisfactory lessons, this did not occur because the teacher did not make it clear to the pupils what was really expected of them through the questions presented. Pupils were not given time to think and reason for themselves adequately as 'teacher talk' dominated the lessons. In the majority of successful lessons, pupils are given encouragement to talk about their learning. This happens throughout the sessions as staff monitor what the pupils are doing and support them as appropriate. This ensures that all pupils have one to one help from adults. In addition, pupils are encouraged to recall what they have learnt and relate this back to objective of the lesson when they all come together.

24. Members of staff generally have high, but realistic expectations, which meet the varying needs of the pupils. However, when sessions were too long it was difficult for teachers to maintain challenge and high expectations and for pupils to uphold their levels of motivation and concentration. Teachers are very aware that pupils have a range of different personal experiences and that this affects their ability to learn. Adults generally plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, those who need extension work and those from all social backgrounds with a great deal of care. However, there is evidence to show that one team leader in Key Stage 2 does not develop this as well through their own teaching as others in the same planning team. Teachers are always mindful that pupils with English as an additional language are represented in the school and they generally support their learning very well. However, when teaching was poor in Year 4, insufficient attention was given to drawing those pupils into the lesson, or to the recognition that their cultural or religious beliefs were equally important.

25. The very high level of care that is extended to pupils is a key feature of teaching. Staff generally manage pupils' behaviour consistently and this has a positive effect on personal development and attitudes to work. Adults are generally calm, although a harsh approach was used in a lesson for pupils in Year 4. They guide and encourage pupils to conform and contribute to class and school activities appropriately. The majority learn to control their impulses and understand the need for rules. A small minority of pupils find it more difficult to behave well all of the time, but staff place a great emphasis on supporting them so that others are not disrupted from learning. Pupils are very confident to express their anxiety to adults. This reflects the school aim to develop pupils' self-esteem and develop their confidence to try new things.

26. All members of staff formally and informally assess what the pupils know and can do during lessons, through specific assessed tasks and through marking of work. Assessments

are generally used well to inform what will be taught next and what activities will be required for individual children, including those with special educational needs, groups or the whole class. This is an improvement since the last inspection. This ensures that most children have equal access and that their learning is extended. However, in Years 3 and 4 the team leader does not take full account of the assessments made by colleagues to inform year group planning. As a result, for pupils in different classes experiences vary, and thus so do the standards they achieve. Marking is variable, but good examples seen, especially in Years 5 and 6, helps the pupils understand what they need to do next and contributes to raising attainment. Staff use their knowledge of individual pupils to set relevant homework that increases as pupils move through the school.

27. Good teaching for pupils with special educational needs is well supported by individual education plans, which are carefully drawn up by the co-ordinator, the teachers and the learning support assistants. A significant factor for these pupils is the assistance and encouragement they receive from all adults involved in their education. Close teamwork is a key feature that is sustained throughout the school. Teachers and support assistants work hard to ensure pupils make improvements and grow in confidence. Regularly, throughout the inspection, support assistants were observed providing sensitive and useful help for pupils.

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

28. The curriculum offered by the school is good, with a suitable balance and breadth. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. All subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education are provided within the recommended number of taught hours weekly, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The balance is appropriate and care is taken to ensure that wider experience in the arts, humanities and physical activities are not neglected. The school has adopted a range of schemes of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) which guide the way that teachers plan across the curriculum.

29. Recent changes to the curriculum for children under six, the Foundation Stage, have been implemented very well. The quality of learning opportunities are very good and offer the children a wide range of experiences that cover all the six required areas of learning. The children gain their knowledge from first-hand and practical experiences whenever possible. The outdoor curriculum is developing, but further improvements are required in order that the reception class children have as many opportunities in this area as those in the nursery.

30. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy. Booster classes and additional support in literacy and numeracy are provided as necessary. Consequently, pupils are now making much better progress and standards are improving. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well in other subjects, such as expressive work in history, and mathematical measurement in geography and science. Information and communication technology has been improved since the last inspection and is supported by a suite with new computers and software. Good cross-curricular links across all subjects provide pupils with opportunities to reinforce their knowledge, skills and understanding. For instance, in design and technology pupils use their knowledge of circuits to make motorised vehicles.

31. The school has worked effectively to address curriculum issues identified in the previous inspection. Long, medium and short-term plans are now in place for all subjects. Teachers plan in teams within each year group and are also assisted in their planning by the subject leaders. However, in history, geography, design and technology, and science, work is planned on a two-year cycle (previously necessary to allow for mixed-age classes); this

arrangement means that there are no clear lines of progression in aspects of these subjects. This needs to be revised, particularly in science where pupils need to develop skills systematically in order that they achieve recommended levels in the end of key stage tests and assessments. The co-ordinator has not recognised this adverse effect on standards.

32. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and fully meets the requirements of the revised Code of Practice and statutory reporting requirements. Over 30 percent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This is a high proportion and there are clear procedures for identifying such pupils at an early stage in their education. They have full access to the curriculum, and they make good progress. Their needs are clearly identified in individual education plans and targets set are used well to plan work and to monitor progress over time. Good use is made of teaching assistants to work with these pupils on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Where pupils are withdrawn for additional help every effort is made to ensure that they do not regularly miss the same subject. Pupils with statements of special educational needs also make good progress because staff, who know them well, adapt the curriculum and set work which is suitably matched to their needs. Pupils are integrated into school life very well.

33. The school's partnership with the community and partner organisations is very good. There are strong links with the local secondary school and pupils are prepared effectively for transfer to this phase of education. They join in an induction day visit prior to transfer, which ensures the smooth transition at the end of Year 6. Partnership with a number of local schools, including a 'beacon' school, provides an opportunity to work together in a variety of ways. For instance, a grant for raising standards was used to bring an author to the schools. The evaluations of the visit were circulated to each school for comparison. The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) helps pupils to exercise and stay healthy through after-school and lunchtime clubs. These links are having a positive impact on attainment.

34. In addition to the formal curriculum a wide range of activities are available outside lessons to enrich pupils' experiences. There are clubs for football, choir, gardening and a holiday club. The school holds multi-sport evenings and there are recorder groups and instrumental lessons. The grounds are used well to support learning: for instance, the 'maths trail'. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to support and enrich the curriculum. During the inspection a circus workshop offered a range of stimulating activities for pupils to try which also contributed, incidentally, to work in the literacy hour. Other examples include theatre groups, birds of prey, visiting authors and poets and first aid training. A wide variety of visits to museums and field trips within the local area, such as Thorpe-on-the Hill, enhance the humanities curriculum.

35. Although the school's planning for pupils' personal, social and health education is in the early stages of development, the provision is good. In lower Key Stage 2, they learn about themselves as developing individuals and begin to understand that they are members of a community. They learn the basic rules for keeping themselves healthy and safe and show that they can take some responsibility for themselves and the environment. By the time they are eleven they take increasing responsibility, respect the differences between people and take a more active role as citizens. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 undertake a rubbish audit around the school and take action to recycle waste in their environment. Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities, for example older pupils looking after younger ones and guiding their behaviour, and this has a positive effect on personal development. Studies include looking at diet and healthy living, the use and abuse of drugs and issues related to citizenship. The science curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about basic life-processes, including elements of sex education. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 benefit from a day where issues associated with growing up, such as sex, bullying, drugs and smoking are

examined. The school values the personal and social education of pupils and it is embedded throughout the school in subject teaching and in the positive and supportive ethos.

36. Overall pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and cultural development is good. This is very good improvement from the previous inspection, and this aspect is now a strength of the school.

37. Pupils' spiritual development is very good and is provided through good quality whole school and class assemblies, moments for reflection and some wonderful moments of awe and wonder in classroom lessons. These moments are generally planned for. For example, pupils are encouraged to be curious about the growth of plants they have set in jars or plastic boxes. They monitor which ones are growing the quickest and longest by carefully taking them apart and just as carefully putting them back in the jar or the soil. Opportunities are also seized when they happen by chance. For example, during the inspection a Tawny Owl was brought in from a wildlife centre. The pupils were amazed when he was taken out of his box and turned his head to look at everyone! Pupils were shown his wingspan, which caused great gasps of amazement, and learned how he kills and lifts his prey with his talons.

38. Provisions for pupils' social and moral development are very good. They are inextricably linked in everyday routines, and with staff leading by example, there is a very clear emphasis on the development of pupils' understanding of right and wrong, honesty, fairness, and respect for themselves and others. This aspect of pupils' development is also promoted through day-to-day ways in which members of staff relate to pupils, correcting behaviour and attitudes by example. This is a strong aspect of the life of the school. Another significant aspect is the way in which pupils are encouraged to share and be sociable with each other. They work well in pairs and in groups. This helps pupils to work harmoniously together and share responsibility for their actions. They are encouraged to be kind to people and treat animals carefully from the time they begin in the nursery. For example, the youngest children caught mini bugs in a special jar and they sensitively replaced them in their natural habitat after they had studied them. Children in the nursery who brought in a small spider learned how to tell the difference between a male and female by carefully checking the feelers at the top of its head.

39. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture and of other cultures is good. They study and replicate the styles of famous artists; they play a variety of musical instruments, and study poetry and drama. A pupils' mother, who is a practising Muslim, comes in and demonstrates mendhi patterns on the pupils' hands. Pupils have studied life in Pakistan and compared similarities and differences with life in England. They tried some Pakistani food and although not everyone enjoyed it, many did. Older pupils enjoyed a French breakfast during the week of inspection and tried to learn some 'café language'. Pupils write stories associated with other cultures, for example about a Bar Mitzvah and show that they understand it is a Jewish festival when a boy comes of age. The school is developing pupils' knowledge of world faiths and cultures of people in multi-ethnic Britain, and has a variety of artefacts to support this learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. This is a very caring school in which pupils' well being is of equal priority to their academic success. They feel valued and protected. The care demonstrated for pupils is very good and this is good improvement since the previous inspection.

41. The school's arrangements and procedures for the protection and welfare of pupils are very good. Members of staff are well versed in the requirements of the local education authority's guidelines for child protection, and deal promptly and sensitively with any issues that arise. Procedures for promoting the health, safety and well being of pupils are very good. Pupils are helped to develop a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through science and physical education. The site manager and the headteacher do a regular trawl of the school to ensure that health and safety and risk audits are undertaken. Good procedures are in place for recording accidents and incidents and several staff, including mid-day supervisors, are trained in first aid and emergency first aid procedures.

42. The school has recently updated its procedures and follows the recommendations in the revised Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Close liaison between the school and outside agencies is maintained and the educational psychologist, language therapist and educational welfare officer all support the school. The use made of individual education plans is productive and has a good impact on the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Targets are usually specific and measurable and are shared with parents. All staff know the pupils well and are always encouraging and supportive.

43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Prompt and efficient registration at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions complies with statutory requirements. The school is relatively quick to follow up unexplained absences. There are several pupils who have difficulty in coming to school due to specific problems. The school works very closely with the education welfare officer and families to try and improve attendance.

44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and dealing with incidents of harassment or bullying are very good. The very clear and concise behaviour policy is generally applied very well. The policies emphasise positive reinforcement as the preferred means of improving behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them. Consistent implementation of the school's procedures minimises the effect of the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils and contributes to pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

45. All adults know the pupils well. Relationships throughout the school are very good and teachers and support assistants demonstrate a genuine concern for pupils' care, support and guidance. Staff generally treat pupils with respect and set good examples of how to behave appropriately. For example, when talking to pupils, adults wait their turn to speak and are courteous and genuinely interested in what pupils have to say. The school works extremely hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and equal opportunity to succeed in learning. The school's determination to meet the needs of all its pupils is reflected very clearly in its policies and practices. Lessons usually proceed in a harmonious atmosphere where pupils' efforts are appreciated and respected. However, one teacher was seen to be rather harsh with pupils in Year 4 and, in addition, did not value the contributions of all pupils. Pupils' achievements demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's procedures and the quality of care and the dedication of all staff. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection.

46. Assessment was a key issue at the time of the last inspection, and the school was asked to establish a whole-school approach that would be consistently applied in all subjects, and used to inform future planning. There has been satisfactory improvement in this area of the school's work, but full consistency has not yet been achieved across all subjects.

47. In the Foundation Stage, where the assessment co-ordinator is based, assessment is developing well and there are good quality systems that could be shared across the whole school. In mathematics and design technology assessment procedures are good and data collected is used to inform curriculum planning for whole classes or groups of pupils. In other subjects procedures are generally satisfactory. In science, whilst some individual teachers assess pupils and use this data productively, there is no whole school system. In addition, there is no analysis of data from national tests and tasks by the subject co-ordinator that would enable a whole-school picture of strengths in subject provision and identify any areas for further development. In English and mathematics, such analysis of test results is used effectively to track pupils' progress as they move through the school, to predict likely attainment levels at the end of key stages and to set targets for improvement. However, overall there is insufficient use of data from national tests and assessments or those that individual teachers carry out to predict levels of attainment and inform planning the next steps in learning for individual pupils and small groups or to diagnose any specific weaknesses or gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

48. The headteacher and other key managers show a strong commitment to improving standards of attainment and have worked effectively to develop procedures to measure pupils' progress. The assistant headteacher has worked closely with the Local Education Authority to ensure that appropriate baseline assessment is in place. This measures pupils' ability in a number of key areas on entry to the school. The same assessment is used at the end of the Foundation Stage and pupils' progress is monitored and analysed effectively. Similar analysis of pupils' progress between ends of key stage at ages seven and eleven allows the school to raise attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and to set targets for school improvement.

49. The newly appointed assessment co-ordinator, the assistant headteacher, has already overseen several improvements in assessment and recording of pupils' progress. For example, she has introduced individual records of achievement that will be added to each year as the pupils go up through the school. In some subjects portfolios have been developed, which contain recent examples of pupils' work. Where these are most effective for judging levels of attainment, they are accurately annotated with the context in which the work was undertaken, the notable features of the work and the National Curriculum level achieved by the pupil. The school's marking policy is now more consistently applied, and senior managers monitor this by sampling pupils' work on a termly basis. The assessment co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the school's progress in the area of assessment and has devised an effective action plan for improving its provision. For example, she has planned training for all staff on the different types of assessment and how the data collected can be used to support and improve pupils' learning and the progress that they make.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school works very effectively to establish very good links with parents and carers. The vast majority of parents responding to the parents' questionnaire and attending the meeting prior to the inspection agreed that the school works closely with them, that staff are very approachable and helpful and they are very supportive of the school and the staff. This is a very good improvement on the previous inspection where partnership was judged unsatisfactory. However, seven percent of parents responding to questions prior to the

inspection were concerned that the school did not work closely with them. Inspection findings show that the school works very closely with parents and they are given very good information about pupils' progress. Concern was also raised about homework, but inspectors judge that pupils are provided with the right amount of homework, and the range of activities outside lessons, although this is judged to be good. There are extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school and a very wide range of first-hand experiences, including visits and visitors.

51. The quality of information provided to parents, especially about their child's progress is very good. Reports are very detailed and clearly state what pupils know understand and can do and include comments from pupils on what subjects they have enjoyed most in school. The provision of three consultation evenings each year, which are very well attended, enables parents to be very well informed about the work their children are doing and the progress they are making, and how parents can most effectively support their children's learning. Staff carry out home visits both before and after joining the school and this helps staff to establish relationships with the children's carers. The detailed prospectus and regular and informative newsletters are very helpful, and keep parents well-informed about school events. In addition, letters are sent out each term stating what will be taught in each year group. This helps parents to support pupils' learning at home. Important information sent home includes the offer of courses to parents, for example, on training to be a classroom assistant or how to prepare for an interview. These classes are free to parents and are run in conjunction with the local college. Parents of children with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved in every stage of their child's progress. They are encouraged to participate in their child's development and are well informed about progress. Full records of contacts with parents are kept.

52. The school is well supported by an active Friends of Monks Abbey School Association (FOMAS) that raises funds that are use to provide activities and equipment for pupils. There are approximately twenty parents who volunteer their time in the school and this includes at least two males. They help in a range of activities, such as listening to pupils read, helping in class, with the library and several more volunteer to help with educational visits and trips. The contribution of parents and carers to their children's learning at school and at home is good and exemplified by a number of parents who attended the course on how to help your child read and write fluently. Parents take an active interest in helping their children with homework, for example helping with reading at home and ensuring that it is completed. The majority of parents attend meetings and many come in to the merit assembly. They are encouraged to communicate with the school, and the school is very committed to a partnership with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher provides very good leadership and good management of the school. She has established a clear educational direction. However, this is flexible and open to change when it will best benefit the school. She has successfully managed change and led the school forward with improvements since 1997.

54. The headteacher motivates and influences staff by leading through example and taking responsibility. She has developed a team of key staff, the central management team, who generally perform very well together and are very effective in supporting agreed school improvement initiatives. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when there were many weaknesses in the temporary arrangements for leadership and management of the school. Members of senior staff generally have a common sense of value and purpose that leading to a partnership approach which helps this to be a good school. A deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher support the headteacher and are part of the

central management team. While they have clearly defined areas of responsibility within the school, there is a stark contrast in performance between the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher, and this is inhibiting further school improvement. The headteacher and assistant have identified that her work needs to be extended further across the school so that her leadership role is even more effective. While this will achieve improvements, the deputy headteacher is not making an adequate contribution to leadership and management. Thus the central management team is not as effective as it should be, for example, in monitoring teaching or standards.

55. The governing body fulfils statutory duties delegated to them well and act effectively as a critical friend. Governors have a clear understanding of the school and are fully involved in establishing the strategic aims and in the drive to raise standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection when they were insufficiently involved in managing the school and monitoring its performance. There is a good working relationship between the headteacher, the staff and the governors. The chair of governors has a particularly close involvement, but all governors are involved in a programme of monitoring what the school does and this is effective in keeping them informed and in helping the school to improve further. As a result, they have a very good understanding of strengths and of areas for development. Governors report to parents annually and all statutory duties are carried out effectively. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

56. The school development plan is well structured. This is an improvement since the last inspection when serious weaknesses were identified. The headteacher has a very good understanding of strategic planning, which guides improvement. The assistant headteacher and most members of the central management team uphold this and they contribute well to the process. The priorities that are the focus of planning reflect the needs identified by school staff and local or government initiatives. They are appropriate to the school's next phase of development. The school sensibly identifies an achievable number of targets for each school year and reviews and evaluates its success with these before beginning the next cycle. Results of this show that the action the school has taken to meet its targets have been good. However, the contribution of the deputy headteacher in the process of audit, review and strategic planning is currently unsatisfactory. For example, in reviewing standards and setting targets for improvements.

57. The culture of setting high standards has improved through the development of good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. This is good improvement since the last inspection. Procedures are well established and contribute to the positive culture of self-evaluation and improvement. This has a direct and positive impact on standards and achievement, as the majority of staff are always striving for something better. However, the contribution of the deputy headteacher to monitoring performance as a member of the central management team is unsatisfactory.

58. Good examples of monitoring standards are seen in the work of the English, mathematics and information technology co-ordinators. This is a clear indicator of their high level of commitment to continue to improve, although there is scope for the science co-ordinator, the deputy headteacher, to have a better understanding of standards across the school because assessment in this subject is unsatisfactory and standards are not monitored closely. The school uses the data it collects about pupils' achievement to review and evaluate its performance. However, the current procedures do not allow for a precise comparison of how well the pupils have done against their own previous performance or that of pupils in similar circumstances, so that precise predictions and target setting can be used to improve standards.

59. Monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is good and has been developed since the last inspection, when there were serious weaknesses. The central management team has a multi-faceted role and work in all the areas of the school. This enables them to have a good overview of provision overall. They, along with the key subject co-ordinators and team leaders, monitor teaching and the quality of education on a regular basis. Monitoring undertaken by the headteacher, governing body and the Local Education Authority supports this. However, the quality of monitoring is variable. Strengths and areas for development are discussed regularly at most team meetings or by co-ordinators and this is very good practice as it ensures that all staff are aware of the requirements for their own work and can develop this. However, in the Years 3 and 4 team, led by the deputy headteacher, this is not practised rigorously and teachers are not sufficiently aware of their own level of performance. This is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is reviewed methodically and issues arising are discussed regularly. Strategies are identified to rectify weaknesses through this procedure and through professional discussions with staff. However, monitoring of the science curriculum, by the deputy headteacher, has not identified weaknesses observed by the inspection team. These are that pupils do not develop skills progressively, which is reflected in overall attainment in this subject.

60. Teachers and non-teaching staff are hard-working, suitably qualified and experienced. They are a dedicated team who provide an effective learning environment for the children. The majority of staff have some delegated management responsibilities and undertake these with enthusiasm and dedication. The contribution of their role to improving provision is good. This includes members of the non-teaching staff for example, administration officers and the site manager. This has improved since the last inspection, when the management structure was unclear and roles were significantly underdeveloped. Some roles need further improvement. That of:

- the assistant headteacher: while her contribution to the management of the Foundation Stage is excellent and has resulted in very good provision overall in this key stage, she now needs to have time to work with other key stages so that the whole school can benefit from her expertise;
- the deputy headteacher: his contribution to aspects of school leadership and management are unsatisfactory;
- the current team leader in Years 3 and 4: leadership is unsatisfactory as evidence shows that there is a lack of cohesiveness in planning and that monitoring is not identifying strengths and weaknesses effectively to ensure that pupils of the same age have equal access and opportunity;
- the science co-ordinator: aspects of leadership, the curriculum, standards pupils achieve and assessment are unsatisfactory.

61. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well. Procedures for monitoring the provision are good. There is very good record keeping and early analysis of pupils' needs. The special educational needs manager effectively supports the staff in ensuring that learning plans for pupils are appropriate and effective. She is involved in regular review of the progress made by pupils with a statement for special educational needs. There is good liaison with outside agencies. Performance management and staff training are linked well to school development planning and the staffs' own personal or professional need. All this contributes effectively to the education the children receive and helps them to learn more effectively.

62. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. Although some areas of the school are very difficult and dangerous to access, staff overcome all difficulties in a variety of ways and pupils' attainment and progress is not affected. However, the staircases, corridors and toilets do limit equal access to provision. For example, the school cannot cater for pupils who require wheelchairs. The quality of learning environment has been significantly improved

since the last inspection and is now very good. The site manager and display co-ordinator, in consultation with the headteacher, have a very important role in this. The displays of pupils' work in the school contribute exceptionally well to the quality of the learning environment; they cover all areas of the curriculum and celebrate pupils' achievements. The value placed on developing the environment emphasises the school's wish to give the pupils warmth, security and comfort.

63. Space is organised very well and areas for promoting all aspects of learning are established across the school. Throughout the day pupils can work in any appropriate areas, for example in the information and communication technology suite or reading in the corridors. This contributes effectively to independent learning and efficient and effective use of the space available. Learning resources are good and enhanced by the contribution of the site manager. He is multi-skilled and works wonders in fixing, mending and building items for the school. For example, during the week of inspection he built two beautiful little bridges for younger pupils to cross as part of their role-play in the garden centre. The quality and range of resources have improved since the last inspection and actively contribute to pupils' learning. The resources are readily accessible, stored and organised methodically and used very well.

64. The school has good control of the funds available and there are well-established financial procedures. This is very good improvement since the last inspection, when serious weaknesses were identified. The planning for expenditure of resources available is very good and the school manages these resources very well. Resources available are aligned to school development planning well and take future needs into account. The school's finances are managed efficiently. An effective overview of income and expenditure is maintained. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Currently projections indicate a large carry-forward into the next financial year. However, much of this is accounted for in expenditure that has not yet been deducted from the budget. In addition, the school has set aside a reasonable contingency for unpredicted staffing costs and potential expenditure relating to the school field. Value for money is conscientiously and successfully pursued. To this extent, the principles of best value are applied well so that resources of good quality are obtained at reasonable cost and expenditure to develop the curriculum and improve standards. However, the principles of best value are not used well to ensure cost effectiveness in the contribution of the deputy headteacher to leadership and management. Overall, there has been very good improvement relating to finances since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils attain, the governing body, headteacher and staff should improve:

(1) the contribution of the deputy headteacher to leadership and management.

(Paragraphs: 5, 10, 17, 20, 24, 26, 31, 45, 47, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 64, 124)

(2) the use of data about what pupils know, understand and can do in order to raise standards in all subjects. (Paragraphs: 5, 10, 46, 47, 58, 107, 118, 124, 131, 146, 154, 158, 163, 165)

These should form the basis for the action plan following the inspection. Other areas for development noted by the inspectors are already in the school development plan. However, the school should bring forward the review of planning where subjects cover a two-year cycle, especially science, and give a higher priority to making the outdoor curriculum more available to reception children.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

82

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

147

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	9	26	22	24	0	1	0
Percentage	11	32	27	29	0	1	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

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	366
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	90

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	120

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	89
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	85

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	22	19	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	21
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	36	38	38
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	88 (61)	93 (68)	93 (84)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	19
	Girls	17	14	15
	Total	36	34	34
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	88 (67)	83 (63)	83 (67)
	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	31	30	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	24
	Girls	19	17	25
	Total	38	36	49
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	62 (69)	59 (76)	80 (69)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	19	18
	Girls	18	18	20
	Total	33	37	38
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	54 (65)	61 (74)	62 (74)
	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	2
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	398
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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	1
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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	201.20

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	816,049
Total expenditure	784,425
Expenditure per pupil	2,026
Balance brought forward from previous year	59,910
Balance carried forward to next year	91,533

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	418
Number of questionnaires returned	159

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	51	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	42	13	3	4
The teaching is good.	67	26	2	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	38	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	1	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	31	1	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	57	32	7	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	62	31	1	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	33	17	7	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Context

66. The Foundation Stage of children's learning begins in the nursery. The provision for children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in an appropriate environment is led by the assistant headteacher and is exemplary. Teaching in the nursery is consistently excellent. Genuine warmth and a deep-rooted understanding of how young children learn underpin this. The children have an excellent start to their education. In the reception classes provision is very good. By the time they are six children are very well prepared to begin working on the National Curriculum. However, further development of the outdoor curriculum is required and some literacy and numeracy sessions are too long. Teaching in the reception classes is very good overall, with examples of excellent teaching in literacy and physical development. Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is a strength of the school.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Children make very good progress in personal and social development because the nursery provides a welcoming environment that helps young children to settle in quickly and feel part of the community and also due to the very good relationships formed with the children's parents and carers. This is extended by the work of the staff in the reception classes. Throughout the key stage, activities planned for the children develop this aspect of learning and in addition, the very high levels of care given to each individual play a crucial part.

68. Achievement is very good because of the very good teaching that children receive. Children are quickly taught the routines of the classes and are expected to contribute to them. The classes are very well organised, with distinct areas where children know they can find particular activities, and there are specific teaching times and times when children work independently. Children make well-informed choices about what they want to do and the materials they want to use because adults spend time explaining the activities on offer. This gives them the confidence to work independently, or in groups and to relate to adults and each other very well. All children, even those with less well-developed personal or language skills, enjoy talking about what they are doing and initiate ideas. Staff are very adept at encouraging children to work together on an activity. They encourage children to collaborate if they feel it will benefit their learning. This teaches children the importance of sharing, working together and to listening to other children's ideas and opinions. In addition, the children learn to take responsibility for their own learning by making choices, deciding when they will tackle particular activities and preparing and tidying up for themselves.

69. Children in all classes are very eager to participate in group or class activities. Staff teach them the 'rules' for classroom behaviour and they learn to take turns. The majority of children listen attentively and share turns to talk, although there is a small minority of children in the afternoon session in nursery who need constant reinforcement from adults to remind them of this. A time in the day set aside for the children to listen to each other helps them to learn that everybody has something valuable to say. Very good questioning and prompting from adults encourage even the most reluctant to share their feelings.

70. Staff change the choice of activities on offer regularly, so that children develop different social skills and learn to co-operate. The majority of children show great care for each other and are aware of each other's needs. Children learn the value of co-operating with each other because staff work together as a team very well, giving the children very good role models.

Communication, language and literacy

71. All staff understand the importance of developing language for communication, understanding and thinking. This is a strength of teaching in the Foundation Stage.

72. By the time children leave the reception classes they have achieved very well in comparison to what they could do when they started nursery. The majority of children attain the expected level in speaking and listening, because opportunities are planned to encourage talk. In addition, adults and children often work together. However, there is a minority of children who continue to have low levels of language despite the exceptionally skilled teaching they receive. These children have the curriculum adapted to meet their individual needs and make good progress in their learning.

73. The excellent teaching of basic skills in the nursery contributes to the standards children attain. This is because it is an environment in which no opportunity is lost to develop some aspect of language. By the time they are in reception, children are competent and confident in speaking and listening, reading words, phrases and sentences and writing for a range of different purposes. In both the nursery and reception, much of this learning is developed through role-play and the variety of activities on offer. Staff capitalise on developing language and literacy skills, whether they are specifically planned or happen spontaneously. Additionally, in the reception classes a literacy session is used to teach specific skills, although these sessions are rather too long to keep children interested.

74. When they start school a significant number of children have limited vocabulary and under-developed speech. Children learn new and interesting vocabulary from listening to adults and to each other. They become increasingly fluent and expressive when talking to each other and adults. By the time they are six, children are confident to contribute to discussions and share their ideas and experiences. The more able children in the reception classes use quite complex structure in their spoken sentences. Staff teach children subject-specific language in whatever activity they have planned. Because of this, children's ability to use a wide range of specific vocabulary is extensive by the end of the key stage. In addition, staff very sensitively rephrase children's poorly constructed sentences for them.

75. Literacy is developed through group activities in the nursery, timed teaching slots in the reception and independent activities and story time in all classes. Children learn very good reading habits. They learn to recognise their names from the time they start in the nursery. Many recognise the names of their friends as well. They can hear and say the initial and final sounds. All children in the Foundation Stage learn through a programme designed to link sounds to letters in familiar words. Children in the nursery sound the letters of the alphabet well because the staff take time to teach this. They learn to read familiar words around the room as staff point them out and ask the children to repeat them as they work in particular areas. By the time they are six, children know how to spell a wide range of words and the more able read quite complex sentences. They enjoy both being read to and reading for themselves. During story times and in literacy sessions children are taught that the print carries meaning. In the nursery, they use the pictures to 'read' (retell) the story to themselves and their friends. By the time they are six, they generally read simple books accurately and the more able children begin to use some expression. Children in reception particularly enjoy reading with older pupils.

76. Children are taught to 'write' for themselves from the time that they start nursery. Role-play and designated writing areas are set up to provide many varied opportunities for learning and practising skills in all classes. Staff frequently work with the children in these areas and model writing for them to copy. Gradually, they learn to form letters correctly because the staff give them individual tuition. Initially they teach them how to hold a pencil correctly, how to sit when writing, how to place the paper and the shape of the letters. Teachers spend time teaching handwriting skills in the reception classes so that by the time they are six, their writing is generally well formed and legible. Children learn to spell simple words correctly as staff recognise when children are ready to be taught this skill. By the time they leave reception, children have made very good progress in communicating their ideas in different forms of writing.

Mathematical development

77. A range of mathematical experiences is provided through the activities available on a daily basis both indoors and outside in nursery, and additional numeracy sessions in reception. As with communication, language and literacy, no opportunity to develop children's learning is lost and the teaching of basic skills is excellent in the nursery and developed very well in reception. Achievement is very good from the time they start nursery to the time they transfer to Key Stage 1

78. The management and organisation of activities is very good and staff are used to the best effect to support children's learning and teach specific skills. Children take part in activities that build on their previous experiences so their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts is taught through practical activities, daily routines, speaking and listening activities and opportunities for structured play. Children of all abilities are given every opportunity to develop at a pace that is appropriate to them and results in very good learning. Lesson plans are carefully adapted to cater for differences in children's prior achievements. For example, less able children in the reception count numbers in sequence starting from zero, while more able children add on from a number selected by the teacher.

79. Children are taught to develop understanding of number by learning about numbers around the classroom. This begins from the time children come into nursery and they count the number of children present. In all classes, adults use a very good range of questions to make the children think about how numbers compare, and introduce language such as 'bigger' and 'smaller'. The daily session numeracy in reception classes is structured to allow all children a chance to 'play' with numbers and gain confidence as well as to develop specific knowledge and understanding, for example, about the value of coins. From the time they start in nursery, children match objects, for example when doing jigsaws, and as their skills develop they sort and match objects to re-order them depending on pattern, size or shape. Water and sand activities give children many carefully planned opportunities to experiment with volume, when they fill and empty containers of different sizes, and weight, when they compare how heavy containers are when full or empty with sand. These activities are all extended in the reception classes and children are taught increasingly complex mathematical concepts.

80. Staff teach rhymes to reinforce children's understanding of number. These also help them to learn about and recreate patterns and to use mathematical language, such as 'more than' and 'less than'. By the end of reception, the majority of children talk about 'sums', 'adding to' and 'taking away', the characteristics of shapes and solve simple problems. When it is appropriate, children are taught to record their observations or findings in a range of ways, for example in diagrammatic or graphical form.

81. Whenever possible, numeracy work is linked to other subjects and there are opportunities for children to explore, think and develop as mathematicians. This is a strength of this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. Children learn well about how to make sense of the world around them. This lays a good foundation for later work in science, history, geography and technology in various forms. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Throughout the key stage, children are presented with a very good range of enjoyable experiences. Consequently their achievement in this area is very good from the time they start in the nursery to when they are six.

83. All of the activities that contribute to this area of learning are based on first-hand and practical experiences. This ensures very good learning because children develop skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate to their age and starting point. Staff plan activities so that the children feel, smell, observe and investigate. Staff capitalise on the children's findings to develop their knowledge, understanding and language. Due to this, exploration, observation, problem solving and discussion are promoted. For example when a child exclaimed, "Look what I've found", the teacher asked the children to try and describe the shape and colour of the object as well as explaining that it was a mini-beast and the dangers of touching it.

84. Staff promote geographical knowledge and understanding initially through the study of their immediate environment. Children talk about routes around the nursery, and when they are in reception they know about different places and say why they were significant, for example the seaside. The children's sense of the past is also promoted through local study. Visitors who come in to the classes also help the children to understand the past. In reception classes children discuss their own past and begin to understand the importance of sequencing events. All children, regardless of their ability, say why particular friends are important to them and this helps them to be aware of the feelings and beliefs of others and lays a good foundation for their moral, social and spiritual development. Children find out about the beliefs of other people through the celebration of festivals and occasions that are special to different cultures.

85. Staff teach children by giving many opportunities for them to express their knowledge and understanding, for example in model making, painting, drawing, writing and by talking about what they know with their friends or staff. Children learn about, and use, technology and during the year, they are taught to use food ingredients and learn to create and assemble edible products.

86. Staff use information technology across all areas of learning. For example in the nursery, children use the computer independently to practise matching, which promotes mathematical learning. Children learn about how technology works through focused teaching and then apply their knowledge confidently to help them succeed in a given task or activities that they choose themselves. For example, children in the nursery learnt how a telephone worked by disassembling and reassembling one.

Physical development

87. Inside and outside, children move around with confidence and safety as the areas are very well organised. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and this, combined with the wide range of good resources available, allows children to develop skills very well and contributes to very good achievement, especially in developing dexterity, which is poor when children start school.

88. Nursery children have a good range of outdoor activities, which cover each aspect of physical development. This is the key to their very good learning. Staff ensure they involve themselves with activities where they have noted children need to be taught a new skill or reinforce something they have learnt before. The indoor classroom is taken outside as much as possible and activities such as sand and water, construction, a quiet area and role-play are all available. In addition two or three-wheeled riding equipment and pushing or pulling toys are readily available. Throwing and aiming are taught well through games using small apparatus. This needs to be more readily available for the children in the reception classes too.

89. Children are taught to handle pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors with control and safety because there are specific times when skills are taught and daily opportunities for free experimentation. They also use appropriate tools for activities such as cooking and modelling. When children are having difficulty handling equipment, staff teach them the right way. For example, some children in reception hold their pencil incorrectly, but staff teach them the correct way and this helps the quality of handwriting.

90. Children are helped to understand the importance of exercise through physical education. Weekly slots in the reception classes are given over to teaching the children about aerobic exercise and the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. In an excellent lesson, the teacher used the time very well to promote children's imagination and ability to balance using a range of body parts and apparatus. Children are taught the importance of warming up their bodies and cooling down after exercise. Teachers use simple language, visual resources and demonstrations to explain tasks to the children. For example, children follow directions to balance on different parts of their feet. They could do this easily when using a flat foot or the balls of the feet, but found it difficult to maintain their balance on their toes. The teacher suggested very good ways to help them improve so that all children could walk well with their arms outstretched to help them to move along a balance bar. Work taught indoors is further developed by staff when children have free choice outdoors.

91. The children's awareness of space is well developed, but the younger children who are less willing to experiment still like the 'comfort' of their own area. This was seen in a session outside when one boy repeatedly returned to the same spot after running all over the hard area. Children learn about the importance of using the space around them. For example, they are taught to run about in large open areas outside taking into account what other children are doing. In addition, in the more confined area of the hall, older children are taught to be aware of each other and frequently cross paths without ever bumping into one another.

Creative development

92. Children make very good progress from their levels on entry to those they attain by the time they leave reception. They achieve very well because there are sessions dedicated to teaching specific skills as well as plenty of choice activities where they can 'have a go' and reinforce the skills learnt independently. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Children are provided with numerous opportunities on a daily basis to 'act out' scenarios that contribute to their creative, social and language development. Even when an activity may be a 'choice' by the children, a very good level of interaction from staff is always provided, if required, to help children learn and develop their ideas. It is clear in observing children at their play how much specific knowledge and language they have absorbed in group times or through demonstrations given by staff.

93. Children in nursery and reception have very good opportunities to play in the role-play areas. This stimulates their ability to 'make believe' and be creative and enhances many other areas of their learning. For example, personal and social skills were practised alongside mathematical skills when children shopped at the 'garden centre'. They put to use the information staff have taught them about the jobs people have and use this knowledge to 'play the part'. They use the skills and language associated with the specific jobs. Children also have many opportunities to 'act out' familiar stories.

94. Art activities are well matched to children's interests and stage of development. Staff demonstrate if a new technique is being taught. For example, mixing different colours in the nursery. Following this children are provided with more opportunities to consolidate learning and have the chance to experiment. Children's paintings are improved because they are encouraged to consider style and presentation when doing their own work following the study of a famous artwork.

95. Creative development is fostered very well through the music curriculum. Children learn about rhythm, through clapping and tapping, and by using percussion instruments. They learn to respond to signals, for example to play more loudly or quietly or when to join in. For example, nursery children learnt when to play their instrument to accompany 'Drummer in the ring'. Children participate in singing, initially by joining in the words with which they are familiar, and then the verse or chorus. By the time they are six, children sing with confidence and enthusiasm and even join in singing in rounds. Teachers use singing times to develop vocabulary and use of language. Staff vary how they present songs to children and this maintains high levels of interest. For example, in an excellent session in the nursery, the teacher brought in an element of surprise as the instruments were hidden from view. This made the learning fun and ensured that children listened for a particular sound. Children in the nursery love playing in the band, because the staff make it fun, and they have no fear of making a mistake. By the time they are six, children use their voices, instruments and hand movements, remembering the sequence, and 'bounce' along in time to the tunes!

ENGLISH

96. Since the last inspection, standards in English have been maintained and pupils continue to attain in line with national expectations. However, pupils now make good progress overall at both key stages and some classes and year groups are starting to make very good progress in English, especially at the ends of key stages, in Year 2 and Year 6.

97. The progress that pupils make in speaking and listening is a good improvement from the situation described in the last inspection report. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress. They listen carefully to the teacher talking and to texts being read to them. They answer questions confidently and listen to and follow basic instructions. By the end of the key stage, pupils explain their views clearly in literacy lessons and in other subjects, such as history and religious education. When they meet visitors and guests, they converse confidently and politely. For example, in a very good history lesson in Year 2, pupils listened to a school governor talking about her experiences of seaside holidays of fifty years ago, and asked related questions. It was clear from their written work that they had taken note of what she had said.

98. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in their speaking and listening. They express their opinions clearly and articulately in class and group discussions, and take part confidently in debates, assemblies and role-play activities. By the end of the key stage, Year 6 pupils show respect for the views of others by listening carefully and taking turns to speak. They are courteous and helpful, for example when they show a visitor who is a local historian around the school, explaining the changes that have taken place since he attended

the school during the war. Pupils describe things that have happened, with more able pupils using more a wider vocabulary and more complex sentence structures.

99. In reading, pupils make good progress at both key stages, in both their development of independent reading skills and in their response to the literature that they read. Although progress is good overall, it ranges from barely satisfactory in some classes and year groups to very good in others. At Key Stage 1, pupils follow commercially produced reading schemes and make good progress in learning to read these graded texts. They learn the spelling of the most frequently used words and about letter sounds and combinations in support of their reading. By the end of the key stage, pupils can read a range of basic texts accurately, with more able pupils reading fluently and with expression. In responding to the texts they share as a class or in groups, they can talk about the main characters and events and they can identify their favourite parts. Many know how to use the school library to find different types of book.

100. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in developing their independent reading skills. By the time they are eleven, most pupils can read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts successfully and show understanding of the author's ideas, themes and 'sub-texts', although some of the less able pupils still struggle to do this. More able pupils use inference and deduction and refer to examples in the text when explaining their views. They can use more difficult skills such as skimming and scanning the text when reading for information.

101. In writing, pupils also make good progress in both key stages. As with reading, progress varies between classes and year groups, with the best progress occurring at the end of each key stage in Year 2 and Year 6. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to form their letters correctly, to join them together and to space out the words of a sentence. They write about their personal news and descriptions, for example of characters they read about or a cold day they have experienced. They start to write in different forms and styles, including poems, reports, letters the opening of a story. They study the features of words to support them in developing their writing skills. For example, pupils learn about syllables by thinking about the names of people they know and about how they can endings to words to change the meaning or tense. By age seven, pupils can write in a range of styles, and most pupils know that sentences that start with a capital letter and end with a full stop and they understand that a sentence must make sense. They know that instructions are written in a particular way, and undertake research projects that culminate in writing. For example, about a chosen author, including the details of his or her life, the audience the author writes for, types of book written and a review of why people should read their books. Most pupils have neat handwriting with regularly sized letters and can spell most frequently used words correctly.

102. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in writing overall. They gain experience of writing in a range of styles and for different purposes, and learn about grammar, punctuation and the rules of spelling to improve the quality of their writing. For example, they rewrite a fairy story as a play-script, complete with stage directions, and identify and use the features of journalistic writing. Pupils learn about verb tenses and how to add prefixes and suffixes to words. By the end of Year 6, most pupils write confidently in a range of styles and their handwriting is neat and properly joined. Pupils of all abilities use punctuation properly, including question and exclamation marks, commas, colons and speech-marks. More able pupils write in paragraphs, using embedded clauses and different connectives to make their sentences more complex and their writing lively and persuasive.

103. The teaching of English and literacy is good overall at both key stages. It ranges from barely satisfactory to very good. The quality of teaching has a direct impact on the quality of learning provided for pupils and on the progress that they can make. Where teaching is best,

teachers plan their lessons well, with a good balance of activities in all of the literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. They choose very good resources that stimulate pupils' interest. Work is matched well to pupils' needs, so that they all can participate in all parts of the lesson. This ensures that the less able can build on their prior learning and extend their skills appropriately, focussing well on their individual learning targets, whilst more able pupils are appropriately stretched to reach their full potential. Support staff are deployed well to help those pupils with learning difficulties.

104. Teachers also include the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. For example, in a very good lesson in Key Stage 2, the oldest pupils in the school made very good progress in their response to a modern children's novel. The teacher had very high expectations for what pupils would achieve, and used a computer linked to a big-screen projector to highlight relevant parts of the text and to brief groups as to what was the next part of their task. Work for each ability group was at the appropriate levels, and a support assistant was asked to work with the least able pupils to help them understand the work. At the end of the lesson, pupils had a secure understanding of how to write a third person report about one of the main characters as if they were a social worker, and knew that they must base their judgements on evidence from the text. Their writing was impressive, and included examples of the more complex sentences that they had been learning about this term.

105. Where teaching is less effective, teachers have a less secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and less expertise in the teaching of basic literacy skills. Work is not sufficiently matched to pupils' needs and sometimes higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Less able pupils are sometimes not included in all parts of the lesson, for example they may not be asked to share their achievements in plenary sessions at the end of the lesson. Here, the lower quality of teaching restricts the progress pupils make.

106. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and with specific learning difficulties. This includes programmes devised by a speech and language therapist, early, additional and further literacy support for pupils of different ages and effective individual learning targets devised by the special needs co-ordinator. Support is provided by withdrawing small groups of pupils, or by deploying support staff to help pupils in class, and this enables them to make the same good progress as other pupils. Pupils learning English as an additional language also receive appropriate provision both in class and in small groups, and they too make good progress. Additional support is given unobtrusively, and no pupil is made to feel 'different' or less valued. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson on character and setting in a folktale from another culture, the special needs co-ordinator worked alongside the class teacher throughout the session. She supported less able pupils, but also discussed other pupils' work with them too. In this way, the two teachers ensured that pupils of all abilities made very good progress in their response to the text, but the less able were also able to focus on their individual targets through the written work without this being drawn to the attention of the others. The range of texts studied makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, and they have opportunities to visit the theatre and to take part in a variety of reading promotions that all enrich the range of learning opportunities provided.

107. The analysis of information gained from testing is analysed and has started to have a positive impact on planning for the subject. The assessment of pupils with special needs is effective in identifying the next steps of learning. The quality of teachers' marking has improved since the last inspection, and is now constructive in showing pupils how they can improve their work. Work in pupil portfolios is now properly annotated with the context of the work and the National Curriculum levels achieved. However, there is insufficient use of tests to monitor pupils' progress in reading, comprehension, spelling and phonics to identify areas

of strength and weakness for all pupils. Similarly, the reading records kept by teachers record books that pupils read and the dates these were read but do not record errors that they make so that patterns might be identified. This impact of this situation was illustrated by the reading survey carried out as part of the inspection and confirmed by examination of the national test results received at the end of the inspection. Comparing the teacher assessments with pupils' test results, it could be seen that there was a very close match of results with lower attaining pupils, but that there was sometimes a difference in the levels gained by higher achieving pupils, suggesting that their progress has not been as closely monitored.

108. Improvement since the last inspection has been good due to:

- very good leadership and management, including the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observations. This has resulted in the identification of good practice that can be shared;
- a good curriculum for English and literacy;
- improved planning through very good implementation of the national literacy strategy, which has improved both the range of literature studied and the balance of activities;
- good quality support for less effective teaching from a member of the senior staff;
- literacy skills being developed through other subjects as well as in specific literacy lessons;
- information and communication technology, which has started to make a positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly in the development of their research skills,. However, not all teachers use computers systematically to develop pupils' skills in spelling, phonics and comprehension;
- very good resources. Money provided to support the implementation of literacy has been well spent on high quality fiction and non-fiction texts for individual, group and class use;
- the school library, including good systems and learning activities that help pupils to use the library effectively and make good progress in developing library and research skills;
- improved relationships with parents, many of whom take advantage of family learning courses, help out in school and support their children's learning by hearing them read or helping them to learn spellings.

MATHEMATICS

109. Standards in mathematics are broadly the same as those expected for seven and eleven year olds. At the last inspection, standards were similar at the age of seven, but large proportions of older pupils were still working towards the appropriate level. At the age of eleven, the majority of pupils are now working in line with expected standards and this is a good improvement since the last inspection. In Year 6, nearly half the pupils have joined the school since the age of seven. The dip in the mathematics tests and teacher assessment results last year was due to a significant number of pupils who had special educational needs, but the trend in the pupils' results in mathematics is rising. All pupils make good progress.

110. The National Numeracy Strategy, introduced since the last inspection, means that teachers are less dependent on published schemes, although they are still used, and this is an improvement. The impact of this is that pupils learn at a rate that is appropriate to their individual needs, allowing more time for the less able pupils to learn a topic or process and for the more able pupils to work at a higher level. Every morning starts with a mathematics session when the pupils answer a range of questions written on the board. They work out the answers in their heads, and at the end of the session, they mark their own work. All pupils have individual targets for the activity and the teachers focus on two questions, after marking, to help pupils learn, and this has a very positive impact on mental arithmetic.

111. By the time they are seven, pupils understand the use of tens and units in addition and subtraction. Pupils multiply by a single digit, tell the time and use simple fractions, for example, a half and a quarter. They gather data and convert it to a simple chart, for example, measuring shoe sizes to discover who has the largest feet. They can name shapes, such as sphere, cylinder and hexagon, and know which shape will fit together without leaving spaces. The more able give change from £1 when using money to solve simple problems. The less able pupils understand odd and even numbers and solve simple word problems by identifying whether they need to add or subtract. They work at a slower pace and their written figures are not as accurate. All pupils can measure in standard units and also non-standard units.

112. By the time they are eleven, the more able pupils are proficient in numerical calculations. They work out percentages and reduce fractions understanding, for example, 2 over 12 is the same as a sixth. They work out angles for a variety of shapes, such as squares, rectangles, kites, trapeziums and parallelograms. They estimate and measure with accuracy and confidence, understand co-ordinates and can convert imperial to metric measurements, for example, gallons to litres, and produce conversion graphs to support this work. They use and create formulas; work out averages from a list of numbers and interpret data accurately. The less able pupils are weaker in working out multiplication and are less accurate in their working out generally. Their work is less tidy, for example, working on place value is made harder by the lack of care in aligning numbers. They are weaker in investigating number sequences and in finding equivalent fractions. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support different aspects of mathematics, for example, using the Internet link to a supermarket to find out 'best value buys', then to work out the unit price and decide the best purchase.

113. Teaching and learning are good overall in both key stages. There were examples of very good teaching, particularly in Year 6 where teaching was consistently very good. Throughout the school, the teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to manage the different parts of the numeracy lessons. The teachers use the mathematical vocabulary well and encourage the pupils to do so accurately. Pupils learn to explain the processes they use to reach an answer and the teachers help pupils through very good questioning and encouragement to apply different methods, particularly during mental mathematics session.

114. Teachers introduce the lessons well, making the objectives clear so that the pupils understand clearly what they are going to learn. Where teaching is good and very good, the teachers develop the pupils' enthusiasm for numbers and lessons are enjoyable. The brisk start to lessons helps the pupils to focus quickly and they concentrate very well on their work. Management of the pupils is good and teachers have high expectations that the pupils will work well. Pupils are expected to work co-operatively in pairs or groups, and do this well; they concentrate on their work and discuss it quietly.

115. Teachers ensure there is a range of practical activities to help pupils learn, for example, when the younger pupils work on money they use a 'shop' to go and buy items and work out the change from 20 pence. Teachers take opportunities in other lessons to support the pupils learning of numbers. For instance, while the younger pupils get their coats to go home they count in five's up to fifty, and if they are not all ready, they count back from 100 in five's. Work is marked well with helpful comment to help pupils learn and develop understanding. Teachers' high expectations reflected in the marking of work and praise for independent work helps pupils to make good progress. In a minority of lessons, where teaching is less successful, the oral and mental counting and rapid recall sessions are not sufficiently thorough, and the plenary sessions do not review or assess what pupils have learned. Occasionally, the pace of the lessons slows so pupils lose concentration and do not focus on their work sufficiently.

116. Teachers use questioning well for different pupils in the class, which extends the more able pupils and reinforces understanding for the less able pupils. The pace of lessons is good giving the pupils enough time to complete the tasks and to sustain concentration. Good use is made of homework; for instance, the younger pupils take work written on cards to help them to learn number skills, which are appropriate to their needs. For example, in Year 2, pupils take homework on doubling numbers up to 15, counting in threes or dividing numbers by ten. The older pupils have homework on a regular basis and teachers have high expectations that the work will be completed and brought into school on time. Pupils' work is assessed on a regular basis and future lesson plans are revised ensuring that if necessary additional work is done to help pupils learn and understand.

117. The mathematics co-ordinator has developed a 'maths trail' in and around the school, which is very good. It helps the pupils to apply their mathematics skills outside the classroom. Each year has a book, which reflects the ages and abilities of the pupils and makes very good use of mathematics around the school. For example, the pupils learn to look for angles in different places and to find three-dimensional shapes, like a sphere. They learn to recognise lines of symmetry in shapes, to estimate then measure, for example, the width of the open entrance to the library. As they move around the school in small groups, their behaviour is very good and the 'trail' brings a good sense of fun to mathematics as well as reinforcing the use of the subject in the wider environment. Around the school there are examples of the pupils using and applying mathematics in other subjects, for instance in art by using the computer to create symmetrical designs.

118. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because:

- co-ordination is very good and the co-ordinator has a good overview of the implementation of the scheme of work based on the national strategy;
- the subject policy is good and provides good guidance for planning;
- monitoring of work and of teachers' planning is done on a regular basis;
- individual targets are set for all pupils and this helps them to make good progress;
- test results and teacher assessments are analysed to assess areas of weakness in learning. However, there is scope to refine this further so that staff more accurately predict levels pupils could achieve and target their work accordingly;
- resources for the subject are good, well organised and accessible and the teachers use them well to support pupils' learning through practical work.

SCIENCE

119. Standards of work seen during the inspection were broadly in line with the levels expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. However, in the tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, standards are below the level expected nationally. This is attributed to insufficient attention to developing pupils' skills progressively through the two-year cycle of planning, insufficient focus on developing investigation and experimentation and inadequate assessment procedures. The impact of this is that attainment continues to be below the expected levels in 2002 national tests. However, there has been an improvement in the number of pupils who have reached the higher levels.

120. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the areas of science they have studied. However, the opportunities for investigation and experimentation are limited. This restricts pupils making better progress. Pupils are beginning to understand changes that occur as materials are heated and to consider whether the changes can be reversed. Through work on melting ice they develop an understanding of fair testing, predicting outcomes and recording findings in pictures. The majority know that there are many different types of materials. Pupils successfully make simple electrical circuits and

are aware of the dangers of electricity. They are beginning to improve their own observational skills and are gradually developing the skills necessary for carrying out investigations. In their study of life cycles, pupils in Year 1 learn about the growth of human beings and the different stages in the life of a butterfly. More able pupils learn more by finding out about the life cycle of a frog. In Year 2 pupils learn about the five senses and use appropriate vocabulary such as 'taste', 'smell', 'touch', 'sound' and 'sight'. Information and communication technology is used to research and presentation of work.

121. By the age of eleven, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the main principles required in investigations. Whilst investigating bone length, pupils in Year 5 are challenged to identify questions and turn them into an investigation. They make predictions about length and measure accurately. Pupils in Year 3 know that the sun and shadows can be used to tell the time. In Year 4, they develop their knowledge of shadows. They compare shadows formed by different materials and draw conclusions from the results. Satisfactory use is made of tools, such as the computer, to analyse experimental data. For example, pupils make comparisons of different measurements by recording their data in bar graphs and line graphs on the computer. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate sound knowledge of diet and health when they plan a balanced menu for a day. They make useful observations and measurements and present information appropriately in tables and bar charts, sometimes using the computer.

122. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement in the teaching and learning of science since the last inspection, as teachers show more confidence and awareness of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge is good, expectations are high and questioning is both skilful and challenging in probing and extending learning. Successful classes were distinguished by teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject and the excellent pace which kept pupils well on task. Pupils listen well to their teachers. They ask and answer questions with confidence. All lessons were characterised by clear objectives so pupils were aware of what they had to achieve. However, on a few occasions the challenges provided lacked rigour and expectations of what the pupils could do were too low. For example, opportunities for independent planning of investigations were under-developed. Pupils' work is regularly marked. Marking is at its best where comments are helpful in enabling pupils to know how to improve their work. Written dialogue between pupil and teacher is an uncommon, but very positive feature, of the best examples of marking seen. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the subject and make good progress.

123. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory because:

- leadership and management are satisfactory, although there are aspects that are unsatisfactory. For example, although some monitoring of standards has been undertaken, it is not sufficient to have a significant impact on pupils' learning and on raising standards;
- planning for science is satisfactory, but does not provide enough detail of what should be taught and to what standard. Work is planned on a two-year cycle (previously necessary to allow for mixed-age classes) which means that two year groups are studying a unit at one time without any changes to allow the different year groups to take alternative approaches or to study certain aspects in more depth. As a result, skills, such as investigation, are not developed in a systematic way that ensures pupils to build effectively on their prior learning. Due to this weakness, the science curriculum is only satisfactory.
- resources have recently been reorganised well to support units of study.

124. Assessment at present is unsatisfactory. Class teachers keep records, but not enough detailed information is currently held to help teachers identify pupils' strengths or weaknesses or to analyse information to guide planning. There is insufficient use of test and assessments to monitor pupils' progress or predict the standards they could achieve.

ART AND DESIGN

125. Standards of attainment in art are above national expectations throughout the school and pupils make very good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

126. In Year 1, pupils learn to create a feeling of light by using overlays of tissue to achieve beautiful representations of Monet's artwork. This is one example of how all ages of pupils look at the work of famous artists. Through this, pupils learn to appreciate line, paint and composition. Pupils practise composition. For example, they work in the three colours of red, yellow and blue and create patterns that they superimpose on backgrounds to create good pictures. They build on these skills in Year 2 when they design and produce a collective montage of Van Gogh's 'Stormy Night' combining a rich range of colour to create the desired effect. Pupils follow a basic drawing course that equips them with skills and working with line, as seen in charcoal sketches where pupils described what they were trying to achieve.

127. In Years 3 and 4 pupils introduce greater detail into their sketching when imitating the work of Georges Seurat. They study 'pointillism' and use their fingers to recreate the same style. In Years 5 and 6, pupils respond very well to a challenge, for example to paint landscapes like the artists Cezanne and Turner. The variations they produce are very good and are evidence that the teaching of basic skills of painting is paying dividends. Pupils in Year 6 have produced some fine responses to the work of Gauguin, Monet and Rubens. They accurately colour match backgrounds from the source and experiment with charcoal, different paints, pencil and pastels to find the media which suits their own style best. Cross-cultural links are developed well. For example, paintings in the style of Theophilus give clear information and tell a story linked to Greek life. Pupils in Year 6 have studied the work of Amedeo Modigliani. They know he was an Italian working in Paris and that his work was influenced by the elongated style of African sculpture. They copy this in their abstract representations of faces.

128. The school very effectively shows how pupils learn more by carrying out projects that allow progressive development. For example, pupils in Year 1 worked together to make a mural. They began by doing individual pencil sketches of their ideas. Once these were refined, they used them as a design for a clay tile. All the tiles were then joined together and the finished product was an impressive mural. Another way in which the school demonstrates pupils' progress is by using themed display in the hall. All classes contribute to this and the final outcome shows the range of skills and techniques taught across the school and the standards attained in each year group. Whilst the pupils have many and varied opportunities to draw and paint using a wide range of media, less work in 3D, printing or work with textiles was seen. Where there were examples available, such as prints using blocks and string, the results are very good. Pupils make good use of information technology to explore colour and form, for example in compositions of jungles and rain forests.

129. Teaching and learning in art are good, although the quality seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory, with one lesson in Year 4 having weak elements, to very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan well to introduce pupils to a range of drawing and painting skills. They are given a stimulating set of tasks that make sure that skills once acquired are applied in progressively more challenging ways. When teaching was satisfactory, the pupils were eager and supported each other. In a lesson in Year 3, the pupils were told what they were expected to learn so they focused carefully on the use of their

brushes. In a Year 4 lesson the objective was not explained well, and it took the pupils some time to figure out what they were supposed to do. Good emphasis was given to the importance of planning work, but the task set for the pupils was mundane and lacked challenge. The lack of resources meant that they could not extend their ideas sufficiently. When teaching was very good in Year 5, pupils understood the activity immediately because it was explained to them clearly, with reference to the technique they were expected to use. Consequently, they were focused on the task and achieved a lot in the session. Pupils spoke confidently about foregrounds, backgrounds and perspective and teaching points given by the teacher helped them to improve these aspects in their work. Relationships were very good and the teacher kept pupils on track through stimulating discussion and questioning. Pupils were involved in self evaluation and all expressed considered opinion about their own and other peoples' work.

130. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because:

- art and design is well co-ordinated. This has improved since the last inspection when the role was under developed;
- the school has successfully introduced the national framework for art, and planning has improved. However, the requirements for teaching the design element of the subject and 3 D work at higher levels is yet to work its way through all year groups;
- there is a programme to teach basic skills in painting and drawing which has a beneficial impact on the quality of pupils' work;
- progression in skills is monitored through whole school display;
- art makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development;
- emphasis is placed on appreciation of pupils' work through very well thought out and beautifully presented displays.

131. Assessment is under-developed. The co-ordinator keeps a portfolio of work, much of which is very beautiful. However staff are not yet using this effectively to identify which activities were successful or where improvements need to be made. Additionally, work in the portfolio is not annotated to show what standard pupils have achieved. The portfolio needs to be more accessible so that everyone in the school community can share in the wonder of the work included within it.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in both key stages. Pupils develop their making skills well and gain a sound understanding of the design process. They evaluate their products and use their evaluation to improve their designs. The lack of a suitable scheme of work identified in the previous inspection has been addressed, and there has been a good improvement in the provision for this subject.

133. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to understand the need for design as a way of identifying problems. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils learn about joining wheels and different types of axles. The more able pupils understand that the sequence of construction needs careful planning before finally making their vehicles. They can express a preference for the type of axle they would use when constructing a vehicle. Whilst creating moving pictures pupils in both year groups learn about levers and sliding mechanisms. In their work on playground structures they are able to consider peoples' needs when designing their play equipment. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils have gained appropriate experience in designing and making, mechanisms and structures. Through practical tasks, such as use of tools and joining materials, they have also built up a range of skills to carry forward into the next key stage.

134. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a satisfactory knowledge of all aspects in generating designs, making artefacts and evaluating their products. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils begin to distinguish between functional and decorative features, and criteria, such as texture and cost that are used when designing a product such as a slipper. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher's good planning and preparation, allied to clear explanations, enabled pupils to design a battery-powered light source. They build on their knowledge of circuits and switches to investigate how and why designers have created light sources for specific purposes. It is clear that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are provided with suitable opportunities to learn about design and technology.

135. In the four lessons observed, teaching ranged from satisfactory to good and was good overall. The quality of the teaching ensures that pupils are able to evaluate their design outcomes and identify ways in which they might be improved. However, teachers do not make enough use of information and communication technology to aid the design element of pupils' work and to explore power movements and mechanisms. In discussion, older pupils show a good awareness of the principles of design and they know that commercial considerations also play a part in the appearance of finished products. The school is adapting the units in design and technology produced by the national guidelines and, as pupils revisit key concepts of design, teachers are using the materials to challenge their thinking and practical skills well. In a Year 1 lesson, the teaching was very good and appropriate links were made with previous learning about wheels. Pupils' understanding of subject vocabulary was reinforced through careful questioning about wheels and axles. The brisk pace and careful planning of activities challenged the children. Resources were well chosen to reinforce the teaching points.

136. Teachers make good links to other subjects of the curriculum, thus making learning relevant. For instance, pupils in Year 4, in their design of moving monsters, made good use of their scientific knowledge and understanding of pneumatic systems. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 have studied various structures for the playground before planning, constructing and evaluating their own artefacts. Design and technology work clearly provides opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills such as accurate measuring, for example, when Year 5 pupils make slippers.

137. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because:

- co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator is aware of strengths and also of areas for improvement, such as in planning;
- there is a framework for long and medium-term plans that ensure a consistent approach to lesson planning. However, planning is based on a two-year cycle, which means that skills are not developed in a systematic way that ensures pupils to build effectively on their prior learning.
- detailed photographic records of activities are kept, which staff are beginning to use effectively to identifying which activities were successful or where improvements need to be made;
- staff have developed a portfolio of annotated work. This is beginning to guide future planning and provides a clear picture of the progress being made;
- resources are organised to support units of study and are developing well;
- design and technology makes a good contribution to personal development, promoting feelings of self-esteem on the completion of a task and involving pupils in many collaborative and social activities which require sharing ideas and equipment.

GEOGRAPHY

138. There were no geography lessons seen during the inspection and it was therefore not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. Judgements about standards are

based on evidence from teachers' planning, discussions with the teachers and pupils, analysis of pupils previous work and from work on display. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. The pupils make satisfactory progress. The school has maintained the standards for both age groups since the last inspection, which is satisfactory.

139. Pupils in Key Stage 1 classes have opportunities to learn about different places, for example, the seaside. They learn to contrast this with the local environment and begin to identify a variety of seaside places around the world, which adds to their understanding of the world around them. Work on the topic is supported in story time by the reading of books such as 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch'. They learn to draw simple maps and plans, for example, their classroom or way to school. They describe the city in which they live and compare it to other cities, for example, that it is small compared to Nottingham or New York. The pupils express ideas about making the local environment safe, having completed a simple traffic survey. The pupils' work in the classrooms and in their books shows links between geography and literacy, where there is extended writing about the seaside and the use of compound words such as starfish, seashell and seagull, which helps them to learn in both subjects.

140. Between the ages of seven and eleven, pupils become increasingly aware of the wider world. They develop an understanding of the environment and the need for conservation. They identify and accurately mark the major cities and rivers in Europe on a map. By the end of Year 5, they identify geographical features in an atlas and their map work is more detailed. By the age of eleven, they can name five continents, recognise Antarctica as a landmass, and know the compass points, including the more complex directions such as Northwest and Southeast. They find countries on a world map and the globe. They understand how to use an atlas and simple co-ordinates to find cities around the world, such as Rio de Janeiro, Karachi and Tokyo. Some of the older pupils are less confident in describing the course of a river and its different states, but others remember the terms 'meander', 'source', 'estuary' and 'delta' from previous work. During Years 5 and 6 the pupils undertake a detailed study of Pakistan comparing climate, everyday life, landscape and the economic and human geography of the country, which extends their understanding of the wider world and different societies.

141. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory because:

- the headteacher, acting as the co-ordinator for the subject, has made a good assessment of the areas for development and work done;
- the scheme of work for geography is based on national guidance for the subject and the policy contains a well laid out expectations of the areas of learning to be taught;
- there is good coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study, including appropriate local studies as well the wider environment. However, geography is taught as part of a two-year cycle with history. This prevents repetition of work, but means that the progression in teaching skills is unclear;
- teachers' planning indicates that assessment of the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is completed regularly and where necessary work is changed to meet the needs of the pupils;
- resources for the subject are good and well organised, making them easily accessible. For example, the large map of Lincolnshire, which has questions about the county, accompanied by maps of the local area and aerial photographs of the school, is a good support to the pupils learning about geographical locations.

HISTORY

142. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection, and pupils continue to attain in line with national expectations in the subject. However, pupils now make good progress in both key stages rather than just in Key Stage 2 because there is an improved focus on teaching knowledge and skills and developing pupils' understanding. However, the subject is taught as part of a cycle with geography. This means that two-year groups are studying a unit at one time without any changes to allow for alternative approaches or to study certain aspects in more depth. As a result, skills are not developed in a systematic way that ensures pupils to build effectively on their prior learning. Due to this weakness, the history curriculum is only satisfactory.

143. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. They study a history-based topic each term, for example past events, famous people, toys and homes. Through these topics, younger pupils learn that some things are old and some new, for example when looking at a range of toys, and that families have different generations. They look at homes built at different times and identify similarities and differences in their construction. Older pupils learn about specific events in history and about the contribution made by different people. They start to understand that things change over time and that these changes affect people's lives, including their own. By age seven, most pupils can correctly identify and sequence objects and photographs from different eras and place these on a simple time line. For example, in their study of seaside holidays through the ages, pupils could say which came from Victorian times, which from fifty years ago and which were contemporary. Pupils know that information comes from different sources, including individual people's memories. For example, in a very good lesson with pupils in Year 2, pupils interviewed a governor on her holiday experiences as a young child fifty years ago.

144. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall, although this ranges from satisfactory progress in some year groups and classes to very good progress by pupils in Year 6. Through their units of study, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of life in different periods of history, through studying invaders and settlers, the Ancient Greeks and Aztecs, and the Tudors. They also study more recent history in a unit on Britain since 1930 and undertake a local history study of Lincoln. They learn to put themselves 'in other people's shoes'. For example, they can imagine what life would be like as a slave in Ancient Greece, and then suggest what a slave owner would look for in a good slave. By the end of the key stage, pupils know the key features and notable events from the periods studied. They continue to develop good research skills, including the use of the school library and of information and communications technology. They understand that certain events affect people's lives. For example, in their study of Britain since 1930, pupils interviewed a local historian about what effect the war had on various aspects of life such as education and entertainment, and what precautions people had to take to keep themselves safe.

145. Teaching of history is good overall at both key stages, but ranges from barely satisfactory, in Year 4, to very good. Few teachers are history specialists, but some plan and teach the subject more effectively than others. This was particularly evident in Year 4. Where teaching is better, teachers plan lessons well and vary written activities so that pupils of all abilities are fully included in all parts of the task and find lessons stimulating and motivating. They place emphasis on both the development of pupils' historical knowledge, skills and understanding and of their literacy skills of reading and writing, speaking and listening. Pupils therefore make very good progress in history and in the practical application of literacy skills. When teachers give older pupils opportunities to participate in research tasks, pupils can also practise skills that they will need at secondary school, such as information technology and library skills. This is very good preparation for the next stage of education. Where teaching is less effective, teachers are less innovative in their planning and work is not fully adapted to meet individual needs leading to pupils not being fully included in the task. For example, less able pupils may be unable to complete written tasks, or pupils of higher ability

are not fully challenged. At other times, activities go on too long and pupils lose interest and begin to fidget.

146. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because:

- the co-ordinator provides good subject leadership, but her monitoring role does not yet include the monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations;
- the history curriculum gives good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. It has strengths in the range of periods studied and in the cross-curricular links, especially with literacy and drama, and in the range of trips and visits to historical buildings and places of interest;
- assessment has been developed and is satisfactory. End of unit assessments are carried out to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of what has been learned, but there is no tracking of pupils' progress in gaining historical skills from unit to unit or year to year;
- resources have been improved and are now good. Good quality 'topic boxes' support the teaching of many of the units studied, and there are plans to further develop the remaining units.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

147. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations throughout the school. All pupils achieve well. Individual education plans for pupils with special needs show where links with information and communication technology can be made and this contributes to their achievement. However, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to use their skills in a variety of different activities.

148. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers ask relevant questions, assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and encourage them to think carefully about their work. This means that pupils of all ages are confident and eager to use computers. They behave well during lessons, using the equipment appropriately, asking and answering questions and sharing ideas with enthusiasm. They enjoy regular opportunities, both during lessons and at other times, to demonstrate their developing knowledge and skill. For example, in sending an email message to a different area of the country. This is very effective and has a positive impact on pupils' confidence and personal development.

149. Pupils can do a range of useful things with computers. By the age of seven they know how to log on to the computer by themselves, remembering their user number and password. They know how to load and access programmes, enjoy creating pictures and patterns and seeing their work printed out. They use the mouse and keyboard with increasing skill. They change the size, shape and colour of letters and words to personalise their work. Pupils have a good understanding of how computers are used in the real world. For example, Year 2 pupils talk about their experiences with travel agents, using computers to check if hotel rooms available, and describe how banks enter account numbers to check if people have enough money before allowing them to take some out.

150. By the age of eleven, pupils use information and communication technology systems to control events, combine a range of information from different sources and exchange ideas with others in different ways. For example, when a label from a school balloon race was found in the playground, they were eager to contact the school to tell them how far their balloon had travelled. They quickly found the school email address and sent a message.

151. During the inspection, many examples were seen of pupils using technology to support learning in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils, working out problems during a mathematics lesson, used the Internet to compare prices of goods at two supermarkets, in

order to see if special offers represented good value for money. On another occasion, two Year 3 classes were learning about note-taking in a literacy lesson. One teacher, using a book about Egypt, helped the children identify which words were important when making notes. The second used the digital projector to demonstrate to pupils how they could highlight key words on the screen, changing the colour to make them stand out from the rest of the text. A number of examples were observed of teachers recording children's singing. This meant that pupils of all ages could listen to and evaluate their work and suggest ways to improve future performances.

152. Creative work on a theme of 'The Haunted House', which used font and size of print to add more impact to pupils' work, is just one example of the way technology is used to very good effect in the many attractive displays around the school and in classrooms. The computer club offers additional opportunities for pupils to use computers in a variety of ways. They choose and use a range of programmes and access the Internet for a variety of purposes. The club operates during lunch breaks and the classroom assistant supports pupils very well.

153. Links with the Local Education Authority advisory service help improve the knowledge and skills of both staff and pupils. For example, during the inspection, the adviser taught a Year 5 class how to create and test out a burglar alarm system on their computers. They then used a micro-switch and pressure mat to make an alarm to protect their machine, showing obvious delight when they were successful. On this occasion, the class teacher was able to help individual pupils while at the same time assess their level of understanding through careful questioning.

154. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because:

- the co-ordinator carries out leadership and management effectively;
- the co-ordinator has a good knowledge of standards across the school as she carries out lesson observations, looks at pupils' work and teaches alongside other staff to share good practice;
- there is a detailed scheme of work to ensure appropriate coverage of the programmes of study;
- teachers work effectively with large and small groups, teaching new skills, extending knowledge and encouraging pupils to share their work and ideas;
- teachers keep records of work covered and pupil progress, although assessment is under-developed;
- the school has appropriate and plentiful resources;
- a computer suite has been set up and has a positive impact on learning and the school is effective in its use of new technology;
- the creation of a 'mouse award' celebrates pupils' achievement as they master a range of skills.

MUSIC

155. Standards of attainment in music are in line with national expectations across the school. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. By the time are seven, pupils sing a range of songs showing a sense of the melody's shape. They maintain the beat during simple accompaniments and respond appropriately when the teacher or another child acts as conductor. They talk about their performance, identifying what was successful and suggesting ways they could improve their work. For example, during a Year 2 lesson using a range of percussion instruments, pupils talked about the need to watch the conductor carefully when playing their instruments. They talked about the effect on their performance of playing with their eyes closed. A Year 1 class listened carefully to a

recording of their performance of 'storm' music and then made good suggestions of how they could improve next time.

156. By the time they are eleven, pupils can maintain their own part when singing by ear and they are aware of how different parts fit together to achieve an overall effect. They recognise and explore ways sounds can be combined and used expressively and they improvise patterns to good effect. For example, during a whole school assembly, the children performed a 'round' very successfully, maintaining their parts with confidence. The school provides many opportunities for all pupils to sing, for example, as a whole school, in classes, as members of the school choir and as soloists. Because of this, pupils sing tunefully, with confidence and obvious enjoyment.

157. During the inspection, the teaching observed was good overall. This is because teachers plan carefully, provide opportunities for pupils to improve their work and use the good range of resources imaginatively. There are a number of opportunities for more able pupils to improve their achievement. For example, they learn more about harmony and reading music through extra-curricular activities, such as the choir, instrumental lessons, recorder group and music club. During the inspection, three pupils played the flute and trumpet to the reception classes. They showed the younger pupils how to assemble the instruments, demonstrating the range of notes each instrument has, finishing off with a short performance with flair and confidence. Throughout, the reception children demonstrated total concentration and true awe and wonder. This was a good example of how more able pupils have opportunities to perform for a range of audiences, while at the same time providing experiences for other children to increase their musical knowledge and understanding.

158. Improvement in the subject has been good and includes:

- improved leadership and management;
- a detailed scheme of work, which includes clear guidance on how to support children of all ages;
- improvement in the area of composing, which was a weakness;
- tracking of pupil progress using discussions with pupils and observations of performance during assemblies, although more formal assessment procedures are not yet in place;
- monitoring standards to build up a picture of pupils' musical knowledge, skill and understanding;
- recording of successful lessons, which the co-ordinator uses this to identify strengths and areas for development in learning across the school. However, she does not carry out lesson observations. This means that she does not yet have a full picture of how well pupils are being taught and whether they are being appropriately challenged;
- development of extra-curricular activities including a choir, which has about fifty members. They perform during school events and on other occasions outside school, including a performance in Lincoln cathedral. This has a very good impact on pupils' personal development. However, there are currently too few opportunities for pupils to experience live musical performances, particularly music from other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. In physical education, standards are in line with national expectations throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make achieve well. By the age of seven, pupils can remember, reproduce and explore a range of actions with increasing control and co-ordination. They develop a range of skills such as throwing and catching. They discuss their own and others' performances, making appropriate suggestions for improvement. Pupils know how to exercise safely and can describe the effects of exercise on their bodies. For example, a group of Year 2 pupils talk about warming up before a lesson, explaining "If [you did] not, you would probably hurt yourself." They also describe

feeling physically tired by the end of the activity. By the age of eleven, pupils talk about the value of exercise to health and fitness. They apply principles of safety when exercising, demonstrating precision, control and fluency in their performances.

160. During the inspection, the school had organised a circus workshop for Year 5 pupils led by a visiting organisation. During the morning, pupils were refining and improving their skills and learning new ones. These include balancing, juggling, cycling, and working together. In the afternoon, the pupils performed before a large audience, comprising the rest of the school and parents. Skills pupils may have learnt before were given a new twist. For example, 'wobble' boards, uni-cycles and 'walking a tightrope' added an extra dimension to balancing. Pupils concentrated throughout, coming on and off 'stage' at the right time, ensuring the performance followed the same brisk pace of a real life circus. They also worked hard at achieving a circus atmosphere. Clowns demonstrated 'slapstick' humour very effectively and the ring mistress showed appropriate dramatic ability announcing each act. Pupils' ability to work together as a team was very well demonstrated when forming a human pyramid as part of the 'Grande Finale' of their performance. The circus workshop was very successful, demonstrating very good pupil progress and excellent personal and social development.

161. Teaching is good. This is because teachers plan well and ensure a good balance between the direct teaching of skills and building in opportunities for individual development. They always begin and end lessons with appropriate warm up and cool down procedures. A dance lesson in Year 1 was particularly successful and demonstrated excellent teaching and learning. The teacher used balloons of different shapes and sizes to encourage the pupils to move in various ways. She demonstrated how the balloon changed shape when being inflated and deflated and how it floated in the air. Pupils talked about the differences and went on to demonstrate their individual interpretation of moving like a balloon, with good imagination. The teacher used a tambour and bells as accompaniment. The pupils responded very well by changing the pattern of their movements appropriately to the musical prompts. Opportunities were provided during the lesson for pupils to watch the performance of separate groups. They made comments about what had gone well and suggested how they could improve next time by using their bodies in different ways.

162. All activities are open to both boys and girls and wherever possible, pupils with special needs are fully involved. Where some pupils are unable to take an active part in the lesson, they are encouraged to review the performance of their classmates, suggesting what went well in the lesson and how activities might be improved. There are a number of ways pupils gain recognition of their success in physical education. Currently, pupils achieve swimming certificates for five, 10 and 25 metres. The English Schools Athletic Association award scheme provides opportunities for all children, including those with special educational needs, to celebrate their success. This helps raise self-esteem and has a very positive effect on personal and social development. The school currently enjoys a very good relationship with YMCA staff. They are in school regularly, leading lessons and extra curricular activities, working alongside teachers. Pupils respond very positively to their approach, which complements that of their teachers. Furthermore, they provide additional male role models for pupils and their input makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' development and motivation.

163. Improvement has been good because:

- the school has a scheme of work drawn up by the co-ordinator, providing very good guidance for teachers on how to teach the whole range of skills. This is particularly helpful for teachers who are non-specialists;

- the scheme contains important information on teaching pupils of different abilities and makes suggestions on how appropriate links can be made with other subjects. This was demonstrated in the excellent Year 1 dance lesson;
- there is an established system of record keeping. However, there is not yet a procedure for assessing pupils' levels of skill.

164. The school has been unable to address the issue of the distance of the field from the school. This was identified in the last inspection report, but action at a local council level is due to have an impact on this.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

165. Standards are in line with expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when religious education was identified as a serious weakness in Key Stage 2. The profile of the subject has been raised by;

- planning to the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus;
- training for staff;
- monitoring of medium term planning, although the co-ordinator is yet to review pupils' work to ensure that the objectives for teaching the subject are met in all classes;
- allocating sufficient time to teaching the subject;
- teaching skills, which has led to good progress being made and improved standards;
- marking work with suggestions for improvement, especially in upper Key Stage 2, which contributes to improving pupils' attainment;
- improving resources;
- beginning to develop systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment, but these need to be applied consistently.

166. By the age of seven, pupils understand that stories may have a deeper meaning and can discuss this well. They can remember parables and recount meanings, which shows the level of their understanding. Pupils sequence a story and pictures, which helps to make it meaningful for them. They can discuss and write about their friends and family and helping other people. They know about the festivals of different faiths and special clothes associated with different religions. Pupils learn to respect sacred books and readings, for example, the Bible and the Torah

167. By the age of eleven, pupils understand and present issues in a variety of ways, for example, animal rights and bullying. They study the lives of people who have had a significant impact on the lives of others. They understand the challenges these people faced. Pupils explore their own beliefs and feelings in sensitive and sensible way. They write about things that are sacred to them. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the rites of passage in different faiths, for example, Baptism and the symbolism of other faiths such as Islam. Good examples were seen of pupils' understanding of moral issues in their work about the environment and related issues.

168. The quality of teaching is good overall. It ranged from excellent, in a class assembly, to poor. This does reflect the variation seen during the last inspection. In the very good or better lessons pupils' learning was very good, as they fully understood the concepts being taught. For example, pupils in one Year 4 class developed a deep understanding of a range of issues affecting society linked to the need for having rules. The highest quality lessons were characterised by an excellent rapport between staff and pupils. Pupils were given a lot of responsibility in presenting their knowledge and understanding orally. Their response was of the highest quality, as were the reflections of others following the these contributions. Pupils and staff gained pride and satisfaction through the progress that had been made in both excellent and very good lessons. In most other lessons, teachers were confident in their own

knowledge and presented the work to the pupils with care and attention so that the pupils knew what they were expected to learn. This contributed positively to their achievement. When teaching was poor, the pupils were totally confused because the teacher was unclear what the objective of the lesson was. The task presented to the pupils was not challenging at all and did not encourage them to think deeply or draw on their past knowledge. Pupils were eager to offer their ideas, but the teacher did not respect them. Pupils of the same age in a different class benefited from very good teaching and learnt very well. Over a period of time, it is evident that the attainment of pupils in the two classes varies considerably.