

INSPECTION REPORT

HAWTHORN TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Boston

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120424

Headteacher: Mr Martin Lister

Reporting inspector: Mr Rob Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th November 2001

Inspection number: 195335

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Toot Lane Boston Lincolnshire
Postcode:	PE21 0PT
Telephone number:	01205 363031
Fax number:	01205 355037
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R C Holtam
Date of previous inspection:	9 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and achievements</i> How well are pupils taught?
19660	Deborah Pacquette	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20010	John Sangster	Team inspector	Science Geography Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
30266	Hilma Rask	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English English as an additional language	
22657	Mark Madeley	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

WES World-Wide Education Service
Canada House,
272 Field End Road
Eastcote,
Middlesex
HA4 9NA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House

33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This medium-sized school is situated on the outskirts of Boston. There are currently 269 pupils on roll, aged from four to eleven. Children's level of attainment as they start school is broadly average. Almost all pupils are from a white ethnic heritage. Two have English as an additional language. There are 27 pupils on the school's register of special needs, a proportion which is close to the national average. Five have statements of special educational need, including moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication problems and medical conditions. This proportion is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Following a period of instability, the school now benefits from effective leadership by the recently appointed headteacher who has the confidence and support of the governing body. Standards have risen steadily over recent years and pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above average. Teaching is good overall. It is consistently effective in the infant classes, but is currently more varied in the juniors due to some long-term staff illness, and difficulties in filling vacancies and in recruiting temporary staff to cover absences. Curriculum planning has improved, but some remaining weaknesses in planning and teaching mean that junior pupils do not achieve as well as they should in art and design, design and technology and physical education. Parents hold the school in high regard. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good, especially in the infants, and pupils progress well.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership.
- Relationships are very good; pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy school.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Governors play an important role in strategic and financial planning.
- Good links with other institutions help pupils to settle in as they start school and to make a smooth transition to the secondary phase.
- The school has very good links with the local community, which add further to pupils' opportunities.
- The proportion of pupils passing tests for selective secondary schools is well above the local average.

What could be improved

- Work in Years 3 to 6 in English and science needs to match more closely pupils' previous attainment and to offer increasing challenge to higher attaining pupils.
- Standards achieved by eleven year olds in art and design, design and technology and physical education.
- The role of curriculum leaders in raising standards and ensuring breadth and depth of work in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Following the previous inspection in June 1997, little was done to address the key issues that the report identified. Much has been achieved since the headteacher was appointed less than a year ago. Overall improvement has been good.

- Consistent systems for the assessment and recording pupils' attainment and progress have been implemented.
- Curriculum planning is more detailed and is regularly monitored.
- Whole school planning is much better.
- Communication within the school and with the wider community has improved greatly.
- Attainment in art, design and technology, and music has improved, although there is still room for improvement.
- Work is set more frequently to challenge pupils at different levels of attainment but higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 need to tackle harder work in English and science.
- The quality of teaching has improved, particularly in the infants.
- Homework is now set more consistently.
- Subject leaders in English, mathematics and science are much more effective and the co-ordination of other subjects is improving.
- Resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have improved and pupils are making better progress.

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	B	B	C	D
Mathematics	B	A	D	D
Science	B	B	E	E

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

Children make good progress in the reception classes. They are on course to meet the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage¹ by the end of the year.

Pupils build well on this positive start and make good progress through Years 1 and 2. Although national test results have varied in recent years, current pupils are doing well in English, mathematics and science; work in other subjects is in line with expectations.

¹ The Foundation Stage is from a child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

As the table above shows, the test results of eleven year olds dipped in 2001, mainly because fewer pupils achieved the higher levels. The work seen during the inspection also indicated that higher attaining pupils could be challenged further.

The standards achieved by eleven year olds in art and design, design and technology and physical education are below those expected at this age. Attainment in other subjects is broadly in line with expectations.

Most pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well in relation to their prior attainments, making good progress towards their individual targets.

There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with English as an additional language are fluent in English and do as well or better than other pupils.

Although the trend in test results was better than the national average until 2000, the drop in scores in 2001 significantly changed the five-year trend. Progress towards the targets for 2002 is currently constrained by long-term staff illness in Years 3 to 6. Despite the commitment of the school to achieve the targets, success will be difficult unless staffing problems are resolved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils are very enthusiastic, interested and involved.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: behaviour is very good in most lessons and pupils behave well around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good: pupils are mature and responsible; they could exercise a little more independence.
Attendance	Very good: attendance is well above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. Reception teachers establish excellent relationships with the children and use effective methods. Lessons are taken at a brisk pace and resources are used to good effect. Teaching is consistently strong in Years 1 and 2. Teachers plan very well and their enthusiasm is picked up by the pupils. They use questions skilfully in a range of subjects, offering challenging work to all pupils.

Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Some lessons seen were very good but a small number, taught by temporary staff, were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers successfully motivate pupils, adopting a lively approach and maintaining high expectations.

Much of the teaching is satisfactory but pedestrian, which means pupils lose interest and the pace of learning slows. Sometimes, pupils with special educational needs are overlooked and higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged because temporary teachers are not aware of their needs.

Most lessons in English and mathematics are taught well. National strategies have been implemented effectively. Teachers are confident in these subjects and make lessons interesting. Pupils enjoy literacy and numeracy sessions but higher attaining pupils could be given harder work, particularly in writing and science.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory: the curriculum is broad and balanced, and pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: teachers usually support pupils well in lessons and pupils benefit from working in small groups with a teaching assistant.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: the very small number of pupils learning English as an additional language are fluent in English and make the same progress as other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good: the school develops pupils' moral awareness well through the way it deals with them as individuals. There are many opportunities for them to develop socially, through the wide range of extra-curricular activities, as well as the opportunities to take responsibility both within their own class and the school
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: pupils are well looked after and their academic and personal development is closely monitored.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. He is supported well in this by the deputy headteacher, local authority advisers and the school's governing body.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities well. It has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: detailed analysis of attainment enables the school to compare its performance with that of other schools.
The strategic use of resources	Very good: the school development plan clearly identifies priorities and the financial implications of what needs to be done. Governors apply the principles of best value well.

The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is effective and has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers are mutually supportive and teamwork is strong. Learning assistants provide good support for pupils with statements of educational need. Accommodation is good except for limited outdoor space for reception children. Vehicular access and car parking are inadequate. The library is rather small and pupils enjoy

using it, but the range of books for older and more experienced readers needs to be extended.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

(Eight parents attended the pre-inspection meeting; 159 questionnaires were returned.)

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of the teaching• The expectation that their children will work hard and do their best.• The way the school is led and managed• The fact that children like school and make good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information for parents about their children's progress• The amount of homework set• Parental involvement in the school

The inspection team agrees with the strengths identified by the substantial majority of parents. The issues that concerned a small number of parents were investigated.

Information provided for parents is good. Parents receive regular letters, newsletters and reports about their children's progress and are invited to open evenings and other meetings. The school's annual reports to parents and governors' annual reports are comprehensive. The homework policy outlines what is expected as children move through the school and homework makes a reasonable contribution to their learning.

There is a good partnership with parents. Newsletters are informative, reports are detailed and there are ample opportunities for parents to consult teachers. The school responds immediately and positively to any enquiries made or concerns that parents might have.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Until 2000, the results of eleven year olds in national tests in English, mathematics and science were improving year on year at a quicker rate than that found nationally. Results dipped significantly in 2001. This was due to the number of pupils in this group who had special educational needs and to the relatively small proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels. Although the number of pupils attaining the expected level for their age matched the national picture, relatively few achieved the higher grade. This brought down the average points score, particularly in mathematics and science. The picture is more positive when the results of eleven year olds are compared to those they achieved when aged seven (often referred to as the 'value added' results). The school's analysis shows that the gains made during these four years were above those expected, particularly in reading and writing.
2. The work seen in Year 6 during the inspection was generally at a reasonable level but higher attaining pupils were not being challenged enough in writing and in science. Their work needs to be more demanding if they are to meet their full potential at the end of the year.
3. Results achieved by seven year olds have varied in recent years. In 2001, scores in reading were above average, and writing and mathematics results matched the national picture. Higher levels were achieved in reading and mathematics by a reasonable number of pupils, but the number gaining these in writing was below average. The work seen during the inspection shows that pupils in Year 2 are working at an above average level, with all pupils – including the higher attainers – being challenged appropriately.
4. The standards achieved by eleven year olds in art and design, design and technology and physical education are below those expected at this age. Seven year olds achieve satisfactory standards in these subjects. In all other subjects, attainment broadly matches that expected at seven and eleven. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls, those from minority ethnic backgrounds or the very few pupils who have English as an additional language.
5. Most pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well in relation to their prior attainments. They usually make good progress in meeting their individual targets. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 did not always progress as well as they should because temporary teachers covering staff absences were not fully aware of the different levels of attainment in the class. This also affected the progress of higher attainers to some degree in English and science.
6. Literacy skills are developed well through the school. Pupils are self-assured during whole class and group discussions. They speak clearly, listen well and express sensible opinions. Pupils learn effective strategies for reading, using the context of the text and their phonic knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils write neatly and spell with reasonable accuracy. They write in different styles, depending on the purpose and the intended reader. Good progress is made in numeracy and most pupils are confident when making mental calculations. Most know the multiplication tables. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and

they measure accurately. They lack confidence in applying their numeracy skills in other contexts, however, and need more opportunities to use them.

7. The school makes great efforts to track pupils' achievement and to set appropriately challenging targets for each year group. Progress towards the targets for 2002 is currently constrained by long-term staff illness in Years 3 to 6. All staff have a high degree of commitment to overcome current difficulties. There are plans to provide booster lessons in Year 6 but, if problems remain during the lead up to national tests, the achievement of targets will be difficult.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The previous report found pupils' attitudes to their work, behaviour and personal development to be strengths of the school. These good standards have been maintained throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, demonstrate very good attitudes to learning, positive values and generally good behaviour which impacts positively on their overall progress.
9. From the time they enter school most pupils are able to sustain good levels of concentration and are interested in what they are learning. Most pupils are enthusiastic and are eager to succeed.
10. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and when moving around the school is good. There are a few pupils who during lessons cannot sustain concentration for very long periods and who find working independently difficult. These pupils' needs are identified and in most classes, the school has clear and positive strategies for managing their behaviour. Teachers work closely with learning support assistants, volunteers and the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure that the disruption to the rest of the class is minimal. Parents support the view that pupils' behaviour is good and the school works hard to maintain its good reputation. No litter or graffiti are present in the school. Most pupils respect and care for the school's property and environment, and show due respect for school property and that of others.
11. Pupils' are polite, friendly and courteous to visitors, greeting them warmly, holding open doors and offering directions when asked. When invited to do so, they speak freely about life in school and willingly share their experiences. Pupils are honest and trustworthy.
12. The personal and social development of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility when given the opportunity. For example, they successfully participate in assemblies, deliver registers and play an active role as classroom and lunchtime monitors. When required to work in pairs or groups in lessons, most pupils do so successfully. They co-operate well with each other and share resources responsibly.
13. Relationships between adults and pupils, and among pupils are very good. Pupils are often observed helping and supporting each other in the playground. In lessons and assemblies, pupils show respect for other cultures, values and beliefs.
14. Pupils' attendance is very good and well above the national average. They enjoy coming to school and are punctual. Pupils' attendance and punctuality make a positive contribution to the quality of learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good overall. It is consistently effective in the reception classes (the Foundation Stage). Teachers establish excellent relationships with the children. Lessons are taken at a brisk pace which means children sustain their attention and interest. Resources are used very well to provide a varied programme of practical activities. Teachers provide a good model for children by reading and writing with them. Children quickly pick up skills by copying their teacher. For example, by pretending to write they learn how to hold a pencil and to write from left to right – important skills for the future.
16. Very productive relationships are also evident in Years 1 and 2, where the teaching is of a similar good standard. Teachers plan very well. They identify each small step in learning and ensure that these are covered in lessons. This approach works particularly well in English and mathematics and is used to good effect in other subjects, such as art. Teachers communicate their own enthusiasm for learning and the pupils pick this up. Skilful questioning helps pupils to draw on their existing knowledge and understanding to tackle new things. Teachers are very confident in a range of subjects, which enables them to pitch work at appropriate levels and to make useful links between subjects. All pupils benefit from teachers' expertise in assessing where they are and what they need to do next. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged.
17. The above characteristics are present in some lessons in Years 3 to 6, but teaching lacks consistency because of the large proportion of temporary staff. Although the teaching is satisfactory overall, with some very good lessons observed, the quality varies considerably from class to class. Much of the teaching is satisfactory but pedestrian, which means pupils lose interest and the pace of learning slows. Because some temporary teachers have not had the benefit of recent training, they do not always provide sufficiently challenging work, particularly in mathematics and science. Sometimes, pupils with special educational needs are overlooked. There are exceptions, such as the very good lessons taken by a temporary teacher in Years 3/4. The children in this class were less affected by staff illness than others. Despite these variations in the quality of teaching, many pupils learn at a good rate because they are good readers and because of the incentive of the 11+ examination, which keeps them motivated to work hard.
18. The teaching of science and ICT throughout the school is good. The quality of teaching varies across other subjects and year groups. In Years 1 and 2, it is good in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, geography and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. In Years 3 to 6, it is satisfactory in most subjects, with some significant strengths in mathematics. Teaching is unsatisfactory in art and design, design and technology, and physical education. This hinders pupils' learning in these subjects.
19. There is no significant difference in how well the school meets the needs of boys or girls, or pupils from minority ethnic groups. It supports the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language very well. The school is committed to providing appropriate support for pupils with different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are not currently receiving their usual level of support because of staffing difficulties. More significantly, expectations need to be raised for higher attaining pupils, who are offered insufficiently challenging work in many lessons.

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

20. The school offers its pupils a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. It meets the legal requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education.
21. There is an appropriate curriculum in place for the Foundation Stage, which prepares pupils well for Key Stage 1, although the limited outside play areas restrict opportunities for children's physical development at this stage.
22. The school is implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well, and they are having a positive effect on other subjects. Setting for mathematics in Years 5 and 6 helps to ensure that work is closely matched to the pupils' previous learning. In most other subjects, the school is using national guidelines to provide schemes for teachers to follow, but as these have only recently been introduced, they are yet to have an impact in these areas and teachers are not yet taking full account of the differing needs of pupils in the mixed age classes in their planning and teaching. There are now satisfactory schemes in place for art and design, design and technology and music, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection.
23. The school provides pupils with special educational needs with access to the full curriculum at an appropriate level. Pupils have their own individual education plans, which are specific, detailed and closely monitored. Parents, outside agencies and teachers are currently involved in formulating the learning targets in the individual education plans. It would improve the quality of provision even further if pupils were consulted when their individual education plans are prepared.
24. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which enrich the curriculum and cater for a wide range of interests for pupils in both the infants and juniors. The school participates in local sporting competitions in athletics, swimming, netball, football and cricket, and in a fishing competition. After-school sports clubs, which include tennis and bowling, are well attended. There are individual music lessons, a recorder club and guitar club, as well as a singing club for Years 1 and 2 and choir for Years 3 to 6. The school makes good use of the local area to enrich the curriculum in history, geography, science and religious education, as well as undertaking visits to places of interest, including London. A residential visit to France for older pupils every two years, in which they join forces with another local school, as well as a residential mathematics weekend at a local centre, contribute further to their range of experiences.
25. The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to benefit from lessons and other activities. Care is taken to ensure that boys and girls are offered the same chances and the small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully integrated into school life.
26. Appropriate sex education and drugs awareness are provided, mostly through science teaching. The school plans to introduce a scheme for personal, social and health education and citizenship, to ensure that these elements are incorporated more fully in the school's curriculum. Participation in the national healthy schools scheme promotes awareness of health issues.
27. The school's very good links with the local community add further to pupils' opportunities. A local store supports an anti-bullying campaign, and Boston United Football Club helps promote literacy and numeracy through the use of its own computer suite. The school has also established very good links with other local schools. A particularly valuable contribution to the school's music is made by a teacher from a local high school, who takes sessions for junior pupils each week. There are effective links with other teachers from the school before pupils move on there, as well

as with the schools who send pupils to the reception classes. This helps pupils as they enter reception and when they leave at eleven. Good links with the local further education and teacher training colleges, whose students work in the school as part of their training, benefit students and existing staff.

28. The provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school is currently reviewing its provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but moral and social development is strong. Further opportunities could be sought across the curriculum to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. Although they have good opportunities to appreciate their own culture, opportunities for pupils to appreciate the diversity of cultures are more limited.
29. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness through provision for music but opportunities through art are more limited. Assemblies are planned around weekly themes and provide moments for reflection and prayer, but they do not always hold pupils' attention sufficiently. Pupils are made aware of the diversity of belief through religious education. Opportunities to provide for pupils' spiritual development are not actively identified and taken up in other subjects.
30. The school develops pupils' moral awareness well through the way it deals with them as individuals. Teachers and other adults discuss incidents with pupils as they occur, and pupils take part in discussion of the rules that are necessary in class and school. There are many opportunities for them to develop socially, through the wide range of extra-curricular activities, as well as through the opportunities to take responsibility both within their own class and the school. Older pupils help teachers in other classes, for instance in the preparation of resources. Pupils have opportunities in 'circle time' in class to discuss matters of concern to them. The school is currently considering the introduction of a school council to give pupils the opportunity to participate more fully in discussion of issues which affect them. Pupils take part in raising money for a range of national charities, and also take the initiative themselves in supporting the Blue Peter appeals, for instance by arranging cake sales.
31. The school welcomes visiting artists and writers to the school, as well as organising visits to places such as Grantham and Skegness, which enable pupils to appreciate their local culture. The school has established a link with an African school, which has enabled pupils to compare different lifestyles, but opportunities to appreciate the presence of different cultures within their own society are more limited, although a visit to Leicester to look at Hindu culture is planned for later in the school year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There is a staff member with overall responsibility for child protection and all members of the staff team are aware of lines of accountability. Levels of supervision, medical care and first aid arrangements are good. The school undertakes regular routine checks of the premises to identify and eliminate any health hazards.
33. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are systematic and very well implemented. The importance of very good attendance is successfully promoted through newsletters and celebration assemblies.
34. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote acceptable behaviour and to eliminate bullying. These have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. Self-discipline is promoted through a variety of strategies that involve rewards

and sanctions, one-to-one counselling, and working in partnership with parents. The school has clear rules to ensure good conduct and discipline. These outline the school's expectations in a positive way and make a significant contribution to the standard of behaviour throughout the school.

35. Educational and personal support and guidance in the school are good. Academic progress is closely monitored. Class teachers keep detailed records of pupils' daily progress, based on pupils' responses in lessons, the quality of their work and the results of class tests. More formal assessments, using nationally recommended tests, are carried out each year. Assessment information is used as a starting point for grouping pupils, so that work can be closely matched to levels of attainment. Reading records are consistently maintained and contain written comments from parents. The school offers good pastoral care for pupils. Problems are quickly identified and handled sensitively. Pupils know that they are cared for.
36. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are well known to permanent staff. The progress of individual pupils is closely monitored by the co-ordinator by reviewing work and talking with teachers and support staff on a regular basis. Progress is recorded in the 'red folder' – an easy reference system, which lists the work each child should do. The school carries through the programme of support for pupils with special educational needs as specified in each pupil's individual education plan. Outside medical and psychological services support the pupils where necessary. Parents support the view that the school cares effectively for their children.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. Parents' views are very positive. They are pleased with the school and the progress that their children are making. They feel welcome in the school and a part of the school's community and their children's learning. Most parents feel that the school is well led and managed.
38. The school actively encourages parental involvement and an effective partnership contributes to pupils' academic and personal development. Parents are happy with the 'open door' policy that is in operation. A significant number of parents participate as volunteer helpers in the school. These parents feel welcomed. The headteacher and staff are easily accessible to parents in the playground before and after school. The school has an active parents' association, which is well supported. Large sums of money are raised annually and are used to enhance the school.
39. Liaison with parents of children with special educational needs is effective. Parents are invited into school to meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator on a termly basis to discuss their child's progress towards meeting the agreed targets. The headteacher attends almost all of these meetings. All statutory annual reviews, with the headteacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and all necessary outside agencies present, are carried out appropriately. Parents are aware that both the special educational needs co-ordinator and the governor who oversees the provision are always available for less formal discussions.
40. Information provided for parents is good. Parents receive regular letters, newsletters and reports about their children's progress and are invited to open evenings and other meetings. The school's annual reports to parents and governors' annual reports are comprehensive and meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Since taking up the appointment at the beginning of the year, he has initiated much of the development that was found to be necessary. He has been supported well in this by the deputy headteacher, local authority advisers and the school's governing body. Parents have commented favourably on the difference in the school, and this is a great improvement on the previous inspection, when the leadership and management of the school were unsatisfactory. At that time verbal and written communication between the headteacher and the rest of the school was described as poor. The headteacher communicates his expectations clearly to teachers and parents, and he enjoys the full support of the governing body. The school lives up to its mission statement in providing pupils with opportunities to reach their full potential, to value themselves and to respect others.
42. The headteacher has established clear guidelines for other staff in carrying out their roles as subject managers, but not all staff have been able to develop this role in evaluating what is happening throughout the school in their subjects. The initial emphasis has been understandably on the national priorities of literacy, numeracy and ICT. There is a shared commitment amongst staff and governors to continue the development and improvement of the school, as has been shown in the way the assessment of pupils' progress has developed.
43. The governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities well. It has a well-organised committee system and individual governors have established effective links with particular subjects in the school. The governing body is aware of the need for development, and has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and also of the pressures this imposes on staff. The school's development plan for the next three years has been drawn up after wide consultation with staff in the school; it clearly identifies the priorities, as well as the financial implications of what needs to be done.
44. The school manages its budget well, although it has been particularly stretched by the need to provide cover for teachers absent through illness. The school secretary carries out the day-to-day administration very efficiently, and spending is monitored well by the chair of the governing body's finance committee and the headteacher. Funds set aside for pupils with special educational needs are used well and supplemented from the general budget, ensuring that these pupils have equal opportunity to take part in the life of the school. Other grants are also used well for the purpose for which they are intended. Funds have been appropriately set aside for modifications to the accommodation, including the provision of a better outdoor area for the youngest pupils.
45. Both the headteacher and local authority consultants have monitored teaching and learning in the key areas of literacy and numeracy, and subject managers are to have the opportunity to monitor their own areas as they become priorities. The school has introduced a performance management system which follows national and local guidelines; all teachers have agreed objectives, which will be monitored during the year. There are good procedures to help teachers who are new to the school; during the inspection the deputy headteacher in particular spent a great deal of time discussing plans with supply teachers working in the school temporarily. Despite the school's best efforts, frequent changes in supply cover mean that some pupils are not given appropriate work because temporary teachers are not aware of their individual needs.
46. The special educational needs co-ordinator carries out her duties very well, with energy and commitment, and receives strong support from the headteacher and governing body. She manages her complex tasks efficiently. She has built up good relationships with outside agencies, such as speech therapists and doctors, and is always looking to

improve her already good knowledge through specialist training. The governor who oversees the special needs provision is well informed and supportive. The special educational needs co-ordinator has prepared a good action plan, which outlines future developments and identifies areas for improvement.

47. The school uses the new technology available well, for instance to analyse information about pupils' attainment. Some teachers also use computers to help with their planning. The Internet is used effectively as a resource by both teachers and pupils. The school applies the principles of best value well, comparing its performance with other schools both locally and nationally before making decisions about priorities in spending.
48. There are sufficient teachers in the school to teach all the pupils, and a vacancy on the permanent staff will be filled from January 2002. Levels of staff sickness have been high, however, and it is not easy to recruit supply teachers at short notice; for instance, during the inspection one class was taught by a different teacher on each of four successive days. This was having an adverse effect on the work being done by these pupils. The school is well provided with support staff for pupils with special educational needs, but there are not sufficient other staff to help teachers with other groups in the classroom, particularly in the Foundation Stage.
49. Support staff and parent volunteers are well informed and effective. They work closely with the teachers and provide high quality assistance, particularly when supporting literacy and numeracy. The school's secretary carries out administrative duties very efficiently. The conscientious caretaker maintains the school in good order.
50. The school's accommodation is good. Classrooms are spacious and there are good areas for play outside, including a grassed field. The area for outside play for children in the Foundation Stage is inadequate, but this has been recognised by the school as a priority in its development plan. Space for working with small groups or for looking after pupils who are ill is limited. The school is bright and airy and well maintained. As a result, the environment is conducive to learning. Corridors and walls are enlivened with displays and examples of pupils' work and other significant information. Vehicular access and parking are very limited. The road outside the school has no pavement and, as many parents bring their pupils to school by car, traffic is very congested, putting children and adults at risk.
51. Resources for learning are satisfactory across the school. The provision for ICT, housed in the new suite, is good. Shortages in science, geography and music, noted at the last inspection, have been made good, but there are gaps in the resources for art; these deficiencies are not helping teachers to raise standards in the subject.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to improve standards, the school should:
 - 1 Review the organisation of teaching groups to ensure that pupils in the mixed aged classes are more frequently given work at the appropriate level, for example (paragraph 19) by:
 - extending the effective setting arrangements in mathematics to English and science;
 - further differentiating day-to-day work.
 - 2 Raise the attainment of eleven year olds in art and design, design and technology and physical education by improving planning, teaching and assessment in these subjects, to

ensure that pupils build systematically on their previous learning as they move through the school (paragraphs 91, 100 and 126) by:

- increasing teachers' subject knowledge;
- developing manageable assessment systems;
- fully implementing the existing schemes of work.

3 Continue to develop the role of subject leaders in the foundation subjects (paragraph 42) by:

- supporting teachers in planning and assessing pupils' work;
- tracking pupils' progress through the school;
- identifying strengths and weaknesses in their subjects;
- enabling staff with expertise in these subjects to share this with colleagues.

Minor weaknesses

- Pursue current plans to provide a suitable outdoor learning area for children in the reception classes (paragraph 61).
- Raise the ratio of staff to children in the reception classes to the recommended levels (paragraph 63).
- Continue to seek funding and planning permission to improve vehicle access and parking on the site (paragraph 50).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	21	13	2	0	0
Percentage	2	23	44	27	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

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)		269
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		27

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	22	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	15
	Girls	21	20	22
	Total	35	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	95 (85)	97 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	16
	Girls	21	21	22
	Total	37	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (90)	95 (90)	100 (95)
	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	21	21	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	15	16
	Girls	16	14	18
	Total	34	29	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (91)	69 (88)	81 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	33	35	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (88)	83 (91)	90 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	233
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	159.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	
	£
Total income	493767
Total expenditure	501077
Expenditure per pupil	1770
Balance brought forward from previous year	10810
Balance carried forward to next year	3500

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	269
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.	52	42	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	49	6	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	55	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	49	17	4	2
The teaching is good.	48	44	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	50	25	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	41	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	46	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	30	48	15	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	46	48	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	48	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	49	10	0	6

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

53. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September after they have reached the age of four. They enter with a wide range of skills and experiences and broadly average levels of attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and social and personal development when compared to children nationally, although baseline assessments are slightly below the Lincolnshire average in language, literacy and mathematics. Almost all the children have had the benefit of local nursery or playgroup experience before starting school.
54. Due to consistently good quality teaching in the reception classes, children make good progress in their learning, and the majority are likely to achieve the nationally expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, personal, social and emotional development, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, by the time they start Year 1. Children with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets, as they have appropriate additional support.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Staff in the two reception classes establish purposeful learning activities within caring and secure classroom routines, and these promote self confidence in the children. Children arrive eagerly at school and enjoy taking on responsibility for setting out and putting away equipment, such as games and large gym mats. They quickly learn the class targets which relate to self care and caring for and respecting others, and behaviour is very good throughout the day. Staff provide very good role models for the children in their fair and consistent approaches and friendly manner. Children were seen to co-operate very well when wrapping up gift parcels for birthday party role-play. When sharing resources such as scissors and shape stamps whilst making party hats, children asked one another politely for a turn with each shape. The teachers' planning includes directed learning activities and children's self-selected activities, such as role-play, painting and modelling. These encourage children to think for themselves and to make their own decisions. Barnaby Bear's birthday party provided children with an opportunity to celebrate together, to take turns in songs and party games and to give to others. They were very joyful in doing this for the giant bear, responding well to the high expectations for good behaviour and co-operation. The very good gains which children make in their personal, social and emotional development provide a positive foundation for their learning in all other areas.

Communication, language and literacy

56. The children enjoy learning the sounds which different letters represent, as this is presented in an imaginative way by their teachers, involving actions and games. For example children were intrigued when a whirring toy x-ray gun was played from behind a screen to represent the sound of the letter x. The children sustained their concentration as they passed around a toy pig and took turns to tell and listen to news. A group of children negotiated who would take on the role of the birthday child in their home play area and then acted out a happy birthday party together unprompted, as resources had been well prepared in advance, and discussions with the teacher and classroom assistant helped to plan their ideas.

57. Children handle books with care and interest and they have frequent opportunities to look at books individually and also to discuss enlarged texts together with their teachers. Teachers discuss the cover, title and likely content of books with the children during whole- class activities and they encourage children to use their early knowledge of letter sounds when looking at the story line together. All children are encouraged to take books home on a regular basis to read with their parents, and regular volunteer parents and a grandparent make a most valuable contribution by sharing storybooks with children.
58. The children have regular opportunities to develop their early writing skills. For example, they take home worksheets to reinforce newly learned letter sounds, and work in small groups with their teacher to try out writing known letters and words. Children discussed a list of items for the birthday party with the classroom assistant, who acted as a scribe to compile the list. Children with special educational needs receive good support alongside their peers to support their early reading and writing development. There are insufficient experimental writing opportunities within the role-play area, however, to complement the writing areas already set up.

Mathematical development

59. Teaching in this area is good and enables children to make good progress in their early mathematical knowledge and understanding. Work on shape is well taught, as the teachers have high expectations of what the children can achieve, and activities are designed to challenge children's thinking. A considerable number of children are able to identify both flat and solid shapes by name, and they can sort them into similar sets. Higher attaining children start to recognise solid shapes in packaging and objects. For example, one child cried out, "This baked bean tin is a cylinder", after handling a range of different everyday objects in a small group activity. Good opportunities are created for counting during daily activities and, as a result, the children start to count items with increasing accuracy. Classroom displays encourage children to look out for pairs of items around the room, and they learn to form written numerals with care. A daily session supports the children in developing their understanding of numbers up to ten and in counting together numbers higher than this. The well-structured use of games makes mathematical learning both enjoyable and motivating.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. The teachers provide good opportunities for the children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children are encouraged to think about their own families and their friends. They learn how candles are used in different religious traditions to represent light. For example they learn that diwas are made for the Hindu festival of Diwali, and that candles are traditionally lit on a tree at Christmas time. They also place candles on a birthday cake in their role-play area. A local grandparent made a visit to talk about his own memories of birthday parties and this fascinated the children, who asked him many questions. In their scientific exploration, the children find out about different parts of the body and how they can use their senses. Children have satisfactory opportunities to use a computer and other everyday technology, and they develop the skills appropriate for their age. Using cardboard boxes, they constructed a shiny robot together, and they enjoyed constructing three-dimensional models which they wrapped up as gifts for Barnaby Bear. Although the children have some opportunities to extend their learning into the outdoor area, the outdoor play environment is very small indeed and its size limits the range of exploratory work and large construction play.

Physical development

61. During well-planned activities in the hall, children make good progress in developing co-ordination and movement skills. They learn how to move around a large space using different parts of the body, and enjoy stretching high to try to touch the ceiling. They show good awareness of space and are able to follow instructions carefully and help with apparatus sensibly. The majority of children display good skills in handling scissors when they cut out the shapes on their party hats, and they show dexterity when they use shapes to print in different colours. Although the outdoor area available for daily activities is very restricted, small groups of children have some opportunities to use the new good quality cars and tricycles. There is a need to extend provision in this area, however, to ensure that all children develop their physical skills through sustained outdoor activities. The school has plans to provide a larger secure enclosed play area. Present staffing levels in the reception classes make it difficult to supervise both indoor and outdoor activities at the same time.

Creative development

62. Through good teaching, children are encouraged to mix colours to represent different skin tones in their self-portraits. They experiment with wax crayons and watercolour washes and were delighted when their firework pictures emerged as wax resist images. Music and singing are well taught and the children sing tunefully such songs as, *I'm a little teapot* and *I had a little cherry stone*. Good use is made of taped songs to support music making and good connections are made with language and literacy through the use of large books and action rhymes. The role-play area is well used to encourage children's imaginative play, although this play would be further enhanced by the addition of further artefacts, dressing-up clothes and dolls to broaden the children's knowledge and understanding of a cultural diversity. The children enjoy imaginative role-play as they act out parties and organise all the things which they need for a tea party and other celebrations.
63. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and the teachers plan effectively, taking account of the guidance for this stage. Baseline assessments are undertaken efficiently and staff have introduced effective assessment systems to monitor children's progress towards the early learning targets for this stage and beyond. Good teamwork between staff is in evidence, and ensures that both classes have the same opportunities for effective learning. The classrooms are attractively set up and children are encouraged to make choices and to work in co-operation with others. A calm, busy atmosphere prevails where the children are secure, relaxed and eager for learning. An increased staffing ratio would further enhance the learning opportunities for all pupils.

ENGLISH

64. Standards achieved by seven and eleven year olds are above average in reading and in speaking and listening. Standards in writing are slightly above expectations for seven year olds and in line with expectations for eleven year olds.
65. The good start in developing early literacy skills which children make in the reception classes provides an effective foundation for their future learning, and this good progress is sustained in the Year 1 and mixed Years 1 and 2 classes. The standards attained in the national tests by pupils aged eleven also demonstrate good achievement in the junior stage. Pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers, as they receive appropriate support from teachers and classroom assistants. The very small number of children learning English as an additional language also make the same good progress as other pupils. Current staffing

difficulties are holding back pupils' learning in the junior stage, particularly those with the potential to tackle more challenging work in writing.

66. Pupils throughout the school have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and are self-assured during whole class and group discussions. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently rehearsed and recited poems on food and, in another lesson, pupils readily suggested what characters in the story might be saying. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 expressed their opinions about the difference between biographies and autobiographies with clarity, and discussed reading texts with a partner confidently.
67. Reading is promoted well throughout the school, as pupils have time to read independently or in small groups with their teachers. Volunteers play a valuable role in supporting children with their reading and regular home and school reading records are maintained. Pupils learn effective strategies for reading and, right from the start, they use their phonic knowledge well when trying to read unknown words, by breaking words down into segments of sounds. They also use their knowledge about language to try to work out the overall meaning of sentences they read, and in the early stages of reading, the youngest children take good account of the illustrations in books, eager to anticipate the story line. Pupils make independent choices in their reading material because books are well organised into levels of difficulty, which pupils can access easily. A fuller range of good quality fiction and factual texts for both home and school use is needed, to further extend personal reading for older and more able pupils
68. A recent focus on handwriting throughout the school is improving the standards of presentation and pupils are encouraged to move towards a joined script by the end of Year 2. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils write neatly. An annual handwriting competition within the school promotes this well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy writing short sentences to accompany story sequences and they like to record their own news and stories in a variety of written formats, such as small home-made books about *The Baked Bean Queen*, and other familiar stories. Activities which focus on the use of different spelling patterns provide useful support for independent writing. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 had imaginative ideas when writing shape poems about footballs and bottles, and pupils in a mixed Years 4 and 5 class wrote lively accounts of their interviews with a local resident about her childhood memories of Boston in World War 2; for example, " When Mrs G. was a girl, they had to go into an Anderson shelter sometimes and it was scary." Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are fascinated by the differences between Shakespearean English and present day English and they write letters in the voice of Shakespearean characters from *Twelfth Night*. Following a visit to Freiston Centre for Environment Education, linked to work in geography, the Years 5 and 6 pupils wrote up accounts of their trip, moving from initial draft notes to more finished versions. Spelling is generally accurate, although some pupils make errors in frequently used words, and do not remember to check these in the dictionary or in their spelling books.
69. Teaching is consistently good in Year 1 and the mixed Years 1 and 2 classes, and it is satisfactory overall in the Years 3 to 6 classes with some good teaching also observed. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher's effective management and lively pace kept the pupils totally engaged in learning about rhymes. Reading was very well taught in a guided reading group and there was good use of assessment. In another very good lesson, the teacher enthused the pupils by her evident enjoyment of the story of *The Baked Bean Queen*. In a good lesson in a mixed Years 5 and 6 class, pupils were well motivated to distinguish the features of biographical and autobiographical texts

because the teacher had selected a wide range of texts, including some of his own treasured cricket collection, for the pupils to discuss in pairs.

70. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has improved standards within the school, especially when teachers provide good role models, reading and writing together with the pupils. Teachers in the junior stage need to take fuller account of literacy learning across the curriculum, however, especially within science and other subjects where there is insufficient focus on independent research and enquiry skills and extended writing. There is also little evidence of the use of ICT for research.
71. The library stock has recently been audited, and unsuitable and out-of-date texts have been removed. There is rather limited space for the school library, however, and insufficient use is made of this area by older pupils for research and study purposes.
72. Resources are well organised and efficient use is made of existing materials and books. The school needs to expand further the range of reading books and large texts for classroom use, however, and increase the stock of dictionaries.
73. The temporary subject co-ordinator has worked very hard in a short space of time to develop new initiatives and there has been good use of advisory support, monitoring and training within the school. The recent introduction of class, group and individual assessment targets is effective in monitoring and recording pupils' progress and attainment.

MATHEMATICS

74. Pupils' work at seven and eleven is above the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics. Standards achieved by seven year olds have risen recently. This improvement is closely linked to the very high quality of teaching in Year 1 and 2 classes. Between 1997 and 2000, there was a continuing increase in the proportion of eleven year olds reaching the standard expected in the national tests, especially at the higher level, and this increase was above the national trend. Results dipped in 2001 and standards are below those found in schools with similar circumstances, indicating that the pupils could achieve more.
75. There is no marked difference between the performance of girls and boys and the few pupils with English as an additional language achieve good standards, one being in the top group in the class. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well when working with teaching assistants and their individual education plans in relation to mathematics are good. They are less well supported in lessons for Years 3 to 6 where temporary teachers are not always familiar with their needs.
76. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100 and many can say and work with numbers beyond this. A good example was in a Years 1/2 lesson when pupils wrote three digit numbers where the digits added to 7, for example 223. The higher attaining pupils could read and order these numbers successfully. Pupils know the properties of the common two- and three-dimensional shapes and use the appropriate vocabulary to describe them, as early as Year 1. Year 2 pupils estimate and measure well using hand-spans and other non-standard measures. The making and interpreting of simple graphs is well taught and pupils in Year 1 showed their enjoyment and above average understanding of this work in a very successful lesson on birthdays.

77. By the age of eleven, most pupils work with numbers to millions and can calculate mentally quite quickly. Most know the multiplication tables. Fractions are understood and pupils are able to write equivalent fractions and change fractions to percentages. Their use of measuring skills is developing and they interpret a range diagrams and charts well. The work in Years 5/6 on finding co-ordinates using all four quadrants was of a particularly high quality and well beyond that found nationally for this age group. Pupils are less secure in estimating length and checking their results because teachers rarely encourage this approach. Throughout the school, pupils lack confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge to problems. Work involving real-life problem solving is not a regular feature of many lessons.
78. While the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall, it could be better in the juniors. There, three classes are being taught by temporary teachers, some of whom have not received recent mathematics training. Lessons in Years 1 and 2 are of a uniformly high standard. Teachers have planned activities for all ability groups and have the appropriate resources immediately available. This means that there is no time delay, nor chance for motivation to flag, between introducing the task and the pupils setting to work. This was a feature of a Years 1/2 lesson on estimation of numbers where resources, including a game on a computer, were ready for the excited and enthusiastic pupils. In every lesson there is good pace to the very knowledgeable questioning, such as in a lesson on number bonds in a Years 1/2 class. This held the pupils' interest and motivated them to do their best. In Year 1, when working on graphs, teachers assess the pupils' work, and help, explain and encourage where necessary. This high quality input from teachers enables pupils to become more self-confident and to make rapid progress.
79. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is satisfactory with some strong features. Pupils studying in Years 5/6 benefit from the setting arrangements because the teaching they receive and the work they have to do is more closely linked to their needs. In a very good lesson in Years 3/4, the teacher successfully coupled a lively and challenging question and answer session on doubling, with new work on halving using numbers beyond 100. The pupils used their existing skills and developed them further as they excitedly tackled work on function machines. In another good lesson in Years 4/5, the teacher linked the pupils' knowledge of money written in pounds and pence with their current work on measurement in metres and centimetres. Where temporary teachers are taking the class, the pace of learning is sometimes slower than in other year groups and pupils are making limited progress. One very positive feature of work in Years 5/6 is the high quality of presentation, which is directly linked to the high expectations the teacher has of the pupils. Presentation was excellent even when a temporary teacher taught the class "...because our teacher insists it's neat".
80. The permanent teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively, but temporary teachers have less secure knowledge. The three-part lesson structure is soundly established and planning is satisfactory, although the use of clear questions at the end of the session to assess what pupils have understood is not a strong feature of teaching in classes for older pupils. Identifying what is to be learnt in a lesson is clearly defined in the planning, but rarely shared with pupils when the lessons begin. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary, which helps pupils to explain their work using the correct terminology. The oral and mental sessions are delivered with great enthusiasm. Pupils learn quickly, show good mental agility and really enjoy these sessions whether using a whiteboard to show their answers or by raising their hand. A number of the activities observed were based on worksheets. It was a positive feature of the teaching that these were appropriately

graded so that all could succeed and that the higher attaining pupils were usually suitably challenged.

81. Pupils' ability to use ICT to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is not well developed. This is because teachers do not provide enough opportunities. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects. For example, pupils were involved in measuring tasks when on a seaside visit, drew graphs in science and took accurate readings using a sensor during an experiment on sound.
82. Teachers use mental tests and half-termly tests as well as less formal observations to assess and record pupils' attainment. In day-to-day marking of work teachers miss the opportunity to set pupils targets in either quality of presentation or accuracy. Assessment and the analysis of results by the co-ordinator are starting to be used appropriately to set sufficiently challenging targets for pupils through the school.
83. The school has maintained good standards since the last inspection and improved standards in Year 2. Results compared to similar schools remain below average, thus there is room for continued improvement.

SCIENCE

84. The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and eleven are as expected for their age. The results achieved by eleven year olds in national tests were well below average in 2001, but this reflected the previous attainment of this year group, as shown in the assessments at the end of Key Stage 1. In the four preceding years, results of eleven year olds had been above average. Although there has been some disruption in their teaching, the standards being achieved by pupils in Year 6 during the inspection were average for their age.
85. Pupils in Year 1 are able to name some of the things that animals eat. They can identify different parts of the body. They understand some of the different sources of light, such as a torch or the sun. In a lesson observed on 5th November, the teacher skilfully used the example of fireworks to show that sources of light show up best at night. She also made good links with the use of light in religious festivals, such as Hanukkah or Diwali, as well as in the Christmas story. There was little evidence, however, of pupils recording their work in writing. Pupils in Year 2 achieve the standards expected for their age. They use data collected in the class about their favourite vegetables to make a graph, and they are able to sort into groups things which grow seeds, lay eggs or have babies to reproduce. Most of the work is completed on worksheets, and there are few opportunities for more able pupils to write extensively. Lower attaining pupils receive greater support from their teacher, for instance in annotating their work, which helps them to learn. In a mixed Years 1/2 lesson, pupils from Year 2 were able to identify which appliances in the classroom used electricity, when the teacher gave them the opportunity to carry out their own investigation, while Year 1 pupils had the simpler task of putting into order of intensity four different sources of light.
86. Pupils in Year 6 had only a small amount of recorded work to show for the first half of the term, and there was little difference between the work of the most able pupils in Year 6 and the less able in Year 5. Pupils understand that light travels from a source and can also be reflected, but in the lesson observed the teacher drew the conclusion rather than letting pupils make their own inference. Older pupils are not always sufficiently extended. There was little evidence of pupils having devised their own investigations, although in discussion pupils from Year 6 showed that they understand

the concept of a fair test. They had carried out an experiment to find out which material would best muffle the sound of an alarm clock, but all pupils had recorded this in an identical fashion. They had predicted the outcome, but not all successfully. In a mixed class of pupils from Years 3 and 4, all pupils showed a very good recall of the names of different bones in the human body; the teacher maintained a lively pace as she fired questions at them, involving all pupils fully in the discussion, expecting and maintaining their attention.

87. The overall quality of teaching is good. The one lesson which was only satisfactory was taught by a temporary teacher, who managed the class well but did not know the pupils well enough to match the work closely to their level of maturity, resulting in time being wasted. In other lessons tasks are usually appropriate for the age of the pupils but there are not sufficient opportunities for the more able to pursue their own investigations, which limits the development of their investigative skills. As a result of the good teaching, pupils are fully involved in the lessons and behave well.
88. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in science, as they measure and record the results of their work, sometimes in graph form, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to devise their own methods of recording and so develop their literacy skills. Some use has been made of ICT, for instance in using sensors to measure temperature, but its use is not extensive.
89. The subject manager has worked hard to draw up an overall scheme which takes account of the mixed age classes and is now being implemented. She has analysed carefully the results from national tests, identifying the need for more opportunities for investigation, but this has yet to be put into practice by teachers.
90. Because of national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, science has not been a priority since the last inspection. Standards of teaching have improved since the previous inspection, as has the regular assessment of pupils' progress after each unit of work. The school uses its own grounds well for the study of animal habitats and the Millennium Garden provides good opportunities for the study of different kinds of rock. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

91. The attainment of seven year olds is in line with that expected for their age and builds well on the work done in the reception classes. Since the last inspection there has been little improvement in the work of eleven year olds and this remains below that expected for their age. Progress has been limited by the three-year delay in writing a satisfactory scheme of work and the lack of opportunity for teachers of older pupils to improve their knowledge of the subject.
92. Pupils in Year 2 can discuss techniques and evaluate the work of themselves and others, using appropriate language, for instance when using charcoal in Year 1, "He could have smudged that bit". But older pupils cannot take this type of discussion much further. Their knowledge of tone, form and pattern are not well developed, although Year 6 pupils could describe how they would get the texture of a piece of wood into their seashore 'still life'.
93. Teaching has improved and is now very skilled and inventive in classes for Years 1 and 2 pupils. Pupils are challenged to explore the subject both practically and in their thinking. Teachers further develop the good skills and techniques acquired in reception classes and pupils have confidence in their own ability. The teachers' subject

knowledge is good and they are very well prepared. Questioning is direct, to the point and has high expectations of the pupils' language skills and art knowledge. In a Year 1 lesson the introductory session on portraits by Keegan, Picasso and Warhol illustrated this questioning very well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress because the teaching they receive is of good quality and they are motivated by high quality displays of their own work.

94. Judging from pupils' work and the lesson seen, teaching in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Teachers lack confidence and therefore artistic skills are not taught effectively. For instance, portraits by Years 3/4 pupils show insufficient progress in observational drawing skill or in the use of light and shade to achieve a depth effect when compared with similar portraits by Years 1/2 (although the features are more accurately drawn and better positioned). Older pupils are not sufficiently aware of the work of great artists and have few experiences of three-dimensional work. When the work of well-known artists was introduced in Years 5/6 the examples were appropriate but too small for all to see. The style of the artists was not discussed using appropriate vocabulary. Because teaching is weak, older pupils are making unsatisfactory progress.
95. The school has benefited from an artist visiting the school and this improved the quality of work in three-dimensions. Photographs showed that work with textiles was well developed with good examples on display in the school garden. The work shows that children considered different colours and textures to create a pleasing effect. Similarly, there was an excellent example in a Years 1/2 class of the pupils' use of recycled material to make a robot, which linked well with current mathematics and language work.
96. Links with ICT help pupils use computer skills to good effect in developing artwork, as in the 'line and fill' drawings based on the style of Kandinsky in the Years 1/2 classes. This quality is not found throughout the school. Because the software is fairly new, pupils in Years 3/4 are at a similar level to younger ones, but work with a painting program in Years 5/6 is more demanding. They created pictures on the screen, devising their own colour schemes and using these to good effect.
97. Positive cross-cultural links are made mainly in older classes. In history, for instance, pupils study the art of the Greeks in Years 5/6 and the Vikings in Years 3/4. There was no evidence of the teaching of art from other heritages and this is a weakness.
98. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very positive throughout the school, and are much better than the last inspection. The pupils enjoy art lessons and work well together. Pupils are attentive and eager to set about the task.
99. Over time there have been weaknesses in the management of the subject; for instance the deficiencies identified in the last report have not been addressed. However, the two co-ordinators have accelerated the development of this subject considerably in a short time. An appropriate policy and scheme of work are now in place to support teachers in their planning as well as good guidelines for display. Planning is monitored and pupils' pictures are photographed to allow staff to discuss and compare work. As yet there is neither formal assessment nor monitoring of teaching. It is essential that the school raise standards for older pupils by improving the subject knowledge of teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards are in line with national expectations for seven year olds but below them for eleven years olds. They are better now than in 1997, when the school was last inspected. The issues raised then of meeting statutory requirements, writing a scheme of work and broadening the resources have all been recently addressed and improved, although there remains a great deal to do. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. This is not the case in Years 3 to 6 where pupils' progress is too slow and often limited by the teachers' lack of subject knowledge and the variable teaching expertise of temporary teachers.
101. Standards in Year 2 result from good teaching. In all classes for five and six year olds, the teaching promotes and encourages the pupils to design, create and evaluate. This was evident when five and six year olds shared ideas well, selected joining techniques and made small 'tee-shirts'. The pupils showed good vocabulary and awareness of the difficulties of, for instance, using sticky tape to join two pieces of fabric, with one six year old said, "The fur may make the sticky side unsticky." The pupils had access to a good range of materials, particularly for their patterning work. This meant that they remained highly motivated and set to their tasks with great enthusiasm. The final session was very well led by the teacher. She used excellent questioning to encourage the pupils to evaluate both the technical and aesthetic qualities of the sewing, stapling and sticking of the two pieces of fabric.
102. Limited teaching of older pupils was observed. Whilst this small sample was satisfactory, the pupils' knowledge and skills indicate that teaching has been unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There is very little evidence to suggest that pupils can either consider the needs of the end user or select appropriate materials for a task. In most cases the materials are supplied – for instance in Years 3/4 when creating 'slippers' – and so the task often becomes making rather than problem solving and design. Between Years 3 and 6, as well as working with food, pupils do use an increasing range of tools, materials and components, including textiles and wood. This is shown in their work on coastal vehicles in Years 5/6 and the 'chairs' and 'gardens' made in Years 3/4, seen in photographic evidence. When working with wood, older pupils mark, cut, join and assemble with increasing precision and are well aware of the need to strengthen joints.
103. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. They work sensibly and safely together and support one another very effectively when they work in pairs in Years 5/6 classes. In a Years 1/2 class they shared ideas and resources well to complete the sewing and stapling tasks. These very positive attitudes are a product of good teaching.
104. The co-ordinator has worked hard recently to raise the profile of the subject. However, little has been done since the last inspection because other responsibilities – such as two periods as acting headteacher – have had priority. The new scheme of work is useful and will help to focus teaching on the elements of designing and evaluating, with which the pupils are less familiar. Resources have improved but the small budget does not cover the annual purchase of consumable items and this limits the range of projects that pupils can attempt. The school needs to raise standards in this subject by giving it a higher priority in development planning.

GEOGRAPHY

105. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Years 1 to 2 during the inspection, but two lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' written work was scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils and teachers. From this evidence

standards achieved by both seven and eleven year olds are broadly in line with expectations.

106. Pupils in Year 2 can identify the different countries on a map of the British Isles. Their work so far this year has been based on the Isle of Struay. They can identify different features on the island, such as houses and a bridge, as well as different forms of transport and different occupations. They have also compared it to Boston, with some impressive display work, and are able to express things they like about their own town – a good example of the subject extending pupils' work in English.
107. Teachers make good use of the local area. In a lesson seen with pupils from Years 5 and 6, the teacher used the knowledge gained from visits to Freiston and Skegness, as well as his own good knowledge of the local area, to reinforce and extend pupils' understanding of the features of coastal areas. Pupils understood some of the effects of human activity on the environment, causing pollution of the coastal area. Pupils have highlighted places they have visited on a map of East Anglia and understand the use of scale on a map. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 plot their own routes to and from school. In a lesson with a mixed class of pupils from Years 4 and 5, the teacher encouraged pupils to use the Internet to plan a journey to India. They were able to locate the British Isles and India on a map of the world. They understand that there are different methods of travel, by land, sea and air. They understand the value of technology in obtaining information, but do not yet have the necessary skills to use the Internet easily to obtain the information they want.
108. In the two lessons observed, the teachers had established good relationships with the pupils, which promoted good attitudes to learning. Pupils were keen to answer questions and maintained their concentration well, even when the introduction to the lesson was long. They behaved very well. Sometimes, however, teachers use worksheets which do not allow sufficient scope for pupils of higher ability to extend their learning through more open-ended tasks.
109. The school is now using national guidelines to help teachers plan lessons, but this has only recently been implemented and so its benefits have not yet been seen. Although the subject manager has monitored work in her own part of the school, she has not yet had the opportunity to look at the work of others, and so help teachers to raise standards. The situation is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.

HISTORY

110. Standards in history are in line with expectations for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven.
111. In their work on the Great Fire of London, pupils in the Years 1/2 class explored how the fire spread across the city. They knew where the fire started and that Samuel Pepys wrote an account of the event. They have a reasonable understanding of times past and present and record this on simple time lines in their classrooms. Pupils compare objects from the past and present and they know about their own recent past. They also found out about the life of Guy Fawkes and the reasons behind present-day firework celebrations. Photographic evidence shows that good use is made of visits, such as to Stamford Museum, to investigate life in Victorian times. For example, pupils enjoyed trying out an old-fashioned washing dolly and water pump.
112. Year 3 pupils find out about the lives of ancient Egyptians whilst Years 4 and 5 pupils clearly enjoyed their enquiry-based work where they interviewed a Boston resident about her childhood in World War 2. Satisfactory standards are achieved in Years 5 and 6 where pupils study the ancient Greeks and compare and contrast the lives of children in Sparta and Athens. They learn about the Greek gods and compare the use of weapons by the Persian and Greek armies.
113. Teaching throughout the school is sound. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher selected resources with care to ensure that the pupils learned appropriate key elements of the story of Guy Fawkes, and she made good links with the children's own recent experiences of firework displays. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had only limited opportunities to compare and contrast different accounts of the Persian wars and insufficient use is made of ICT to extend knowledge and understanding of history. Although pupils with special educational needs make the same satisfactory progress as their peers, more able pupils in the upper part of the school could be further challenged to undertake independently researched work and extended writing linked to this.
114. The enthusiastic new co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching in the subject. She has taken care to ensure that a two-year rolling programme is monitored throughout the school, however, in order to meet the curriculum needs of pupils in mixed age range classes. Assessment systems are not yet in place to monitor pupils' knowledge and understanding of history. The school has a satisfactory range of resources for the teaching of history and overall makes appropriate use of primary and secondary sources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

115. The standards achieved by seven and eleven year olds are broadly in line with expectations at these ages. All pupils are benefiting greatly from the ICT suite, which has been available for about a year. The oldest pupils have been able to take advantage of the new facilities for only a small proportion of their school life so the impact has yet to be fully evident in the standards achieved. The rapid progress being made across the school indicates that standards are rising at a good rate, however.
116. The quality of teaching is good and an important factor in pupils' achievement. Teachers use the computer suite effectively. During a very good lesson, the Year 1 teacher skilfully combined the teaching of art and design with the development of ICT skills. She successfully encouraged pupils to observe closely photographs of fireworks and to recall the colours of fireworks they had seen the previous weekend. Pupils used the painting program confidently. They used the mouse and pointer to select colours

and choose painting tools. The resulting pictures were highly effective and demonstrated to pupils how ICT can be used to create effects not possible by conventional means. Although early in Year 1, pupils had little difficulty in locating and opening the program, saving and printing their work. Work on display included writing and labels which pupils in Years 1 and 2 had word-processed using a professional level program. Year 3 pupils demonstrated good computer skills and recalled making graphs with the computer when they were in Year 2. Work with a programmable floor robot is scheduled for later in the year. Given their level of general confidence, most pupils are likely to reach the expected standard in this aspect of ICT.

117. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are building steadily on this sound base. There is some repetition in the work covered, however. For example, Years 3/4 pupils were using the same paint program as used in Year 1 and, although the lesson was satisfactory, it could have been better if pupils had been given specific challenges, such as mixing colour and producing different shades, tones and levels of opacity. There was certainly no lack of challenge in a lesson for Year 4 pupils. In preparation for work in geography, where pupils were to investigate the various possibilities and costs for travel to India, the teacher had set up a spreadsheet on the computer network. Pupils were fascinated as they changed values in different cells and the computer automatically changed other values. Due his expertise in the subject, the co-ordinator was able to encourage the pupils to explore the program independently; he clarified pupils' misconceptions and answered their varied questions. All pupils made progress. Less confident pupils were supported by their classmates and the higher attainers investigated further possibilities.
118. Good work in presenting information using word-processing and desktop publishing techniques was evident in Years 5 and 6. A display about World War 2 was enhanced by colourful titles, and pupils' word-processing skills had been used to good effect in writing accounts of the main events of this period. Although pupils were not seen using sensors to log data, they had recently used a sound sensor to investigate the sound-proofing characteristics of various materials and work is planned later in the year to develop their skills in control technology.
119. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. An ICT suite has been established, currently supported by a full-time technician. New software has been acquired and the co-ordinator has reviewed the curriculum to help ensure that computers are used more frequently in other subjects – an area identified as lacking in mathematics, for example.
120. The co-ordinator, with the support of the headteacher and governors, has managed changes well. The development plan for ICT identifies the way forward, including further staff training and the establishment of a manageable assessment system to track pupils' progress through the school.

MUSIC

121. Due to timetable arrangements, very little music was observed during the inspection. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. The only direct evidence of standards was the singing heard during assemblies, informal singing in the younger classes and the preparation in Years 5 and 6 for a combined concert with local schools. This, together with other evidence, indicates that the standards achieved by seven and eleven year olds are broadly in line with expectations. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, when standards were low and progress was poor.

122. Although the singing in assemblies was reasonably tuneful, pupils sang with little expression. Younger pupils were enthusiastic but this was less apparent in assemblies for Years 3 to 6. In complete contrast, when practising for a forthcoming concert, pupils showed how well they could sing. Expertly led by a music specialist from the local secondary school, pupils sang with great expression. The teaching was dynamic and the session was taken at brisk pace. Pupils were carried along by the teacher's enthusiasm and responded with obvious enjoyment. They sang tunefully and with expression. Some songs contained difficult intervals but they picked these up quickly. Their rendition of *Train Whistle Blowing* complete with vocalised steam train sounds was very effective; pupils captured the mood of the song and expressed this well. They were equally interpretive when joining in an African chant led by the teacher. Their obvious enjoyment was confirmed by the spontaneous applause that broke out at the end.
123. Planning, based on a published scheme, includes all aspects of the music curriculum. Class teachers, who are not specialists, find this helpful. Pupils' understanding of such aspects of music as rhythm and pitch is evident from their written recordings. They use standard notation to record rhythm patterns and are learning the names and duration of notes, such as crochet, quaver and minim.
124. Visits to performances and music centres enhance the curriculum. For example, preparations were in hand for a visit, together with other local schools, to a production in London. Instrumentalists visit the school and provide workshops, for example in percussion. Visiting performers, such as the Blackfriars Arts Centre Outreach Group, give pupils a taste of professional musical theatre. Pupils have the experience of singing in choirs outside the school.
125. A new co-ordinator has been appointed and will take up her post in January. The headteacher has overseen the subject since the previous co-ordinator left. With his other commitments, music has understandably not been a high priority and the lack of a well-qualified subject leader has meant the profile of music has diminished recently. The school is committed to developing music and other creative activities further, indicated by the designation of the new post as 'co-ordinator for the performing arts'.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and below them in Year 6, except in swimming where they are at the appropriate level. Whilst standards have remained the same in Year 2 since the last inspection, they are now worse in Year 6. There is little difference in standards between boys and girls and both have equal access to the whole curriculum, including team games. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are not disadvantaged in this subject and achieve standards and make progress similar to their peers. The range of outdoor work was criticised before but has now been extended to provide reasonable opportunities for adventurous activities.
127. Pupils in Year 2 work enthusiastically in gymnastics, for example when creating a sequence travelling across apparatus moving from one balance to another. They thoroughly enjoy all their work and co-operate well with each other. In Year 1, they have increasing control when balancing and holding their position, and the good quality of teaching encourages and challenges them to do even better. Common strengths are that the lessons are well planned and most teachers have good subject knowledge. Seven year olds link movements into simple sequences quite successfully, and show an increasing awareness of the space around them. They are able to work independently and with a small group. Teachers could give them more time to reflect

and offer views on their own performance, and that of others. In a games skills lesson in Years 1/2, pupils worked hard at the tasks set, even when they were very difficult, and demonstrated a sound ability to use a bat and ball. Their progress was restricted because they were not given suitable coaching on specific techniques such as how to hold the bat properly.

128. Much of the work is of an inadequate quality in Year 6 and overall teaching is weak in Years 3 to 6. The main reason for this is that the temporary teachers' subject knowledge is unsatisfactory and thus the tasks they set the pupils do not challenge or interest them. This leads to poor quality gymnastic and dance movements and sometimes a poor response from groups of boys. The work progresses quite well in Years 4/5 where the teaching is more focused on developing skills, knowledge and understanding. In gymnastics, pupils perform a range of jumps with precision and control and can evaluate which is better – landing with feet together or feet slightly apart. In dance, in Years 3 /4, they tried to move gracefully to a complex Indian dance rhythm, though few were successful in the lesson. By Year 6 pupils are no longer tackling open tasks, however, such as “with your partner create a sequence of at least eight movements whilst you travel in, around and over the apparatus,” but merely holding balance positions for 12 seconds. This is unsatisfactory progress. Whilst most can hold these balances, offer physical support, where necessary, and constructively criticise each other's work, this is insufficient for Year 6 pupils. The games lessons were not observed. In discussion, pupils indicated that they were familiar with most team sports and highlighted the positive fact that boys and girls play all sports, often in mixed teams. Some pupils have very limited knowledge of simple attacking and defending tactics and these need to be improved.
129. The school offers a 12-week block of swimming for all Years 3 to 6 pupils and, if there is time, to Year 2. Pupils gain a great deal from these lessons. Their general ability is beyond that which is expected, that is, a 10-metre swim showing a good stroke plus some idea of water safety techniques. All pupils had knowledge of the effect of exercise on their bodies and this aspect of physical education was taught well by all teachers. Older pupils could offer detailed information and could also accurately use a good range of specific vocabulary.
130. The co-ordinator energetically promotes the subject. The new scheme of work and the recent purchase of guidelines have helped to improve teaching, especially in classes for five and six year olds. The school must raise standards of performance in Year 6 and address weaknesses in the quality of teaching for older pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131. Pupils aged seven and eleven achieve standards which meet the expectations of the local authority's agreed syllabus for religious education.
132. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are familiar with stories from the Old Testament, such as Daniel in the Lions' Den. A higher attaining pupil showed a thoughtful understanding of the significance of the story when he wrote, “from that day people pray to anyone they like”. Pupils have compiled a ‘calendar of celebrations’, and in lessons observed in the mixed age classes of pupils from Years 1 and 2, they have a good understanding of the events commemorated by the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. Teachers made good use of a video to tell the story, intervening appropriately to check that pupils were following and had understood. Pupils then used Jewish symbols, such as the Star of David, to make their own Hanukkah cards, thus reinforcing the significance of the festival as a celebration.

133. It was not possible to observe any lessons with pupils from Years 5 and 6 during the inspection, but discussions with them showed that they have knowledge of all the major world faiths, including Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism. Their recent work shows an emerging understanding of the range of Hindu manifestations of God. Their recall of less recent work on Islam and Buddhism is not as clear. They are familiar with stories from the New Testament, such as the account of the crucifixion, or the parable of the Good Samaritan, although they do not fully understand the significance of the parable, one pupil suggesting that you help others so that they will help you. They know stories from the Old Testament, such as Noah's Ark or the Burning Bush, but they are not clear about the distinction between the Old and New Testaments. Only a minority of pupils recognise that Jesus was a Jew. Pupils show an awareness of the diversity of religious traditions represented in their own society, although they have not yet had the opportunity to visit places of worship of non-Christian faiths.
134. In a lesson observed with pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher made good links with literacy by reading poems about feelings before retelling the New Testament parable of the lost son. He used questions well to draw out from pupils the meaning of the story and gave them good opportunities to act out situations involving forgiveness, so developing speaking and listening skills. It became clear that pupils had not fully understood that forgiveness necessitated a change of heart, however, and the majority thought it was just a matter of saying "sorry". Some even said that the lesson of the parable was not to spend your money too quickly!
135. Pupils generally behave well and show an interest in what they are learning, but they lose concentration when discussion goes on for too long and they are not actively involved in the lesson. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but sometimes teachers' knowledge of the subject is not as good as it should be, and this affects the learning of pupils.
136. The headteacher is the subject manager and has planned a scheme which meets the requirements of the recently revised local syllabus, incorporating national guidelines where appropriate. He is also putting together a portfolio of work of pupils of all levels of ability, which will help teachers understand what is expected. However, teachers do not yet assess pupils' progress against the criteria of the new syllabus. Teaching is reinforced by assemblies, which take up some of the themes from the agreed syllabus. Standards have broadly been maintained since the last inspection.